



48 PAGES--EVERY WEEK!

ACTION

NO. 621
\$1.50
CAN \$2.00
U.K. 60p

COMICS WEEKLY

BLACKHAWK™



PLUS:
GREEN LANTERN • WILD DOG
SECRET SIX • DEADMAN
SUPERMAN

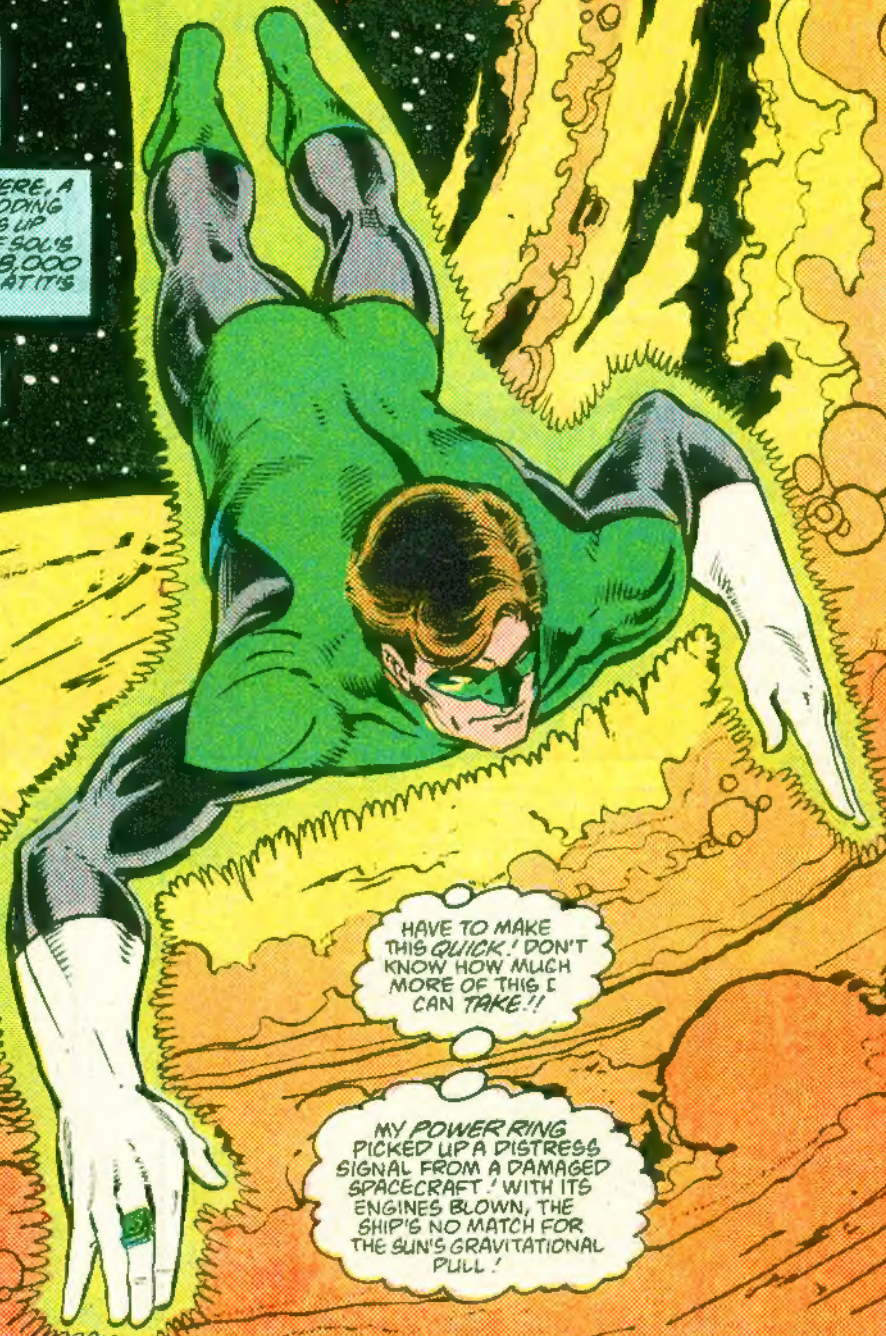
GREEN LANTERN

"GREMLINS!"

WELCOME TO SOL, A G2-CLASS YELLOW DWARF STAR LOCATED EIGHT LIGHT MINUTES AWAY FROM EARTH.

THIS IS THE PHOTOSPHERE, A SWIRLING MASS OF EXPLODING HYDROGEN THAT MAKES UP THE OUTER FRINGE OF SOL'S ATMOSPHERE. ABOUT 8,000 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT AT ITS COOLEST POINT.

THAT'S THE GOOD NEWS.



HAVE TO MAKE THIS QUICK. I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH MORE OF THIS I CAN TAKE!!

MY POWER RING PICKED UP A DISTRESS SIGNAL FROM A DAMAGED SPACECRAFT. WITH ITS ENGINES BLOWN, THE SHIP'S NO MATCH FOR THE SUN'S GRAVITATIONAL PULL!

By
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INKS LETTERER COLORS ASST. EDITOR EDITOR

THERE'S A CREW OF 600 ABOARD THAT SHIP! I COULDN'T IGNORE THE REQUEST!

TROUBLE IS, MY POWER RING IS INEFFECTIVE ON ANYTHING YELLOW! THE DEEPER I GO INTO THE SUN, THE HARDER IT GETS TO KEEP MY FORCE FIELD GOING!

I'M TAKING A BIG CHANCE JUST GETTING THIS CLOSE! KIND OF SENDS MY HEART UP INTO MY THROAT!

I GUESS TAKING RISKS... PUSHING THE LIMITS IS THE FUN PART OF BEING A GL!

IF I PLAYED THINGS SAFE ALL THE TIME, THIS JOB WOULD GET REAL BORING.

I'VE GOT THE SHIP LOCKED IN! IT ISN'T MUCH BIGGER THAN A BASKETBALL!

I COULD JUST CARRY THE THING...

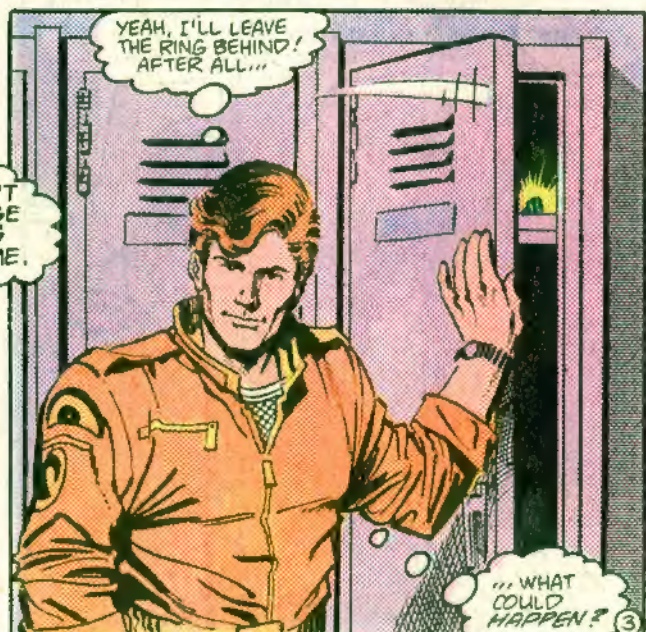
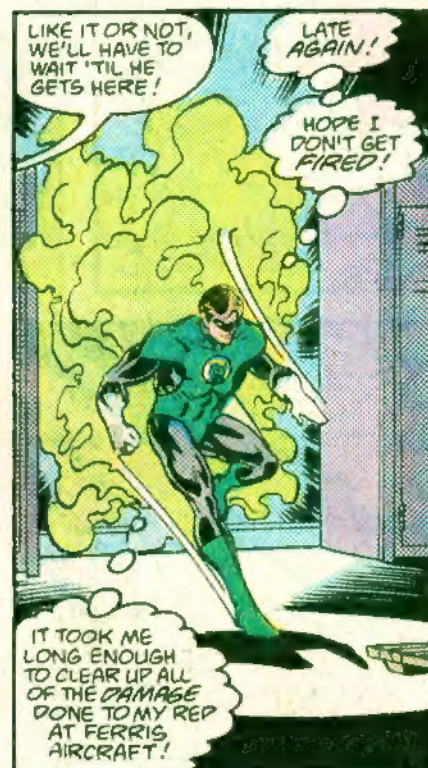
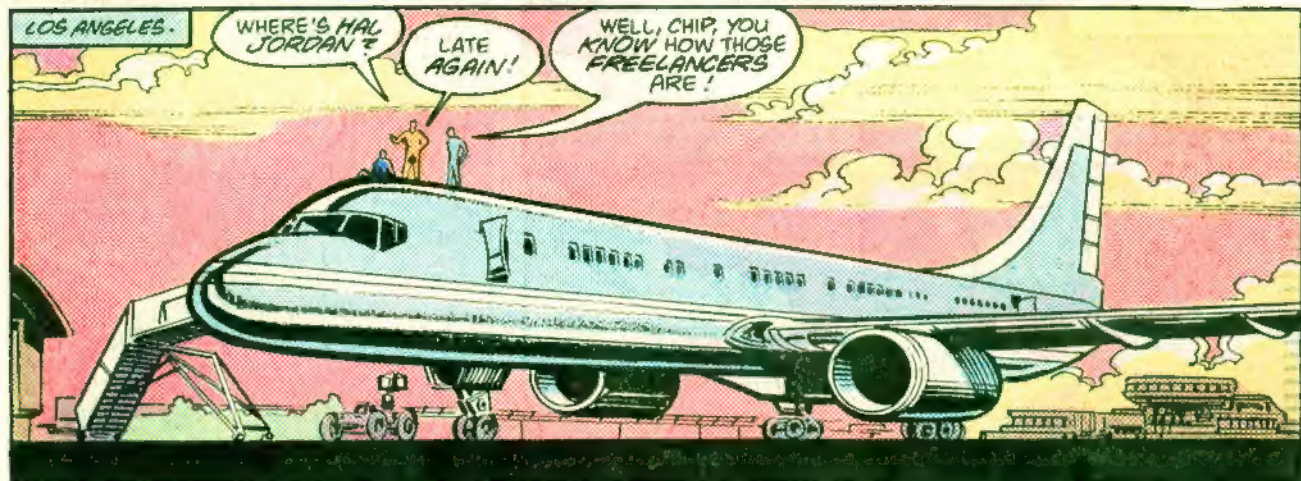
... BUT I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THIS RACE'S CULTURE. IF I TOUCH THE SHIP, I MAY, BY THEIR CULTURE, DEFILE IT--

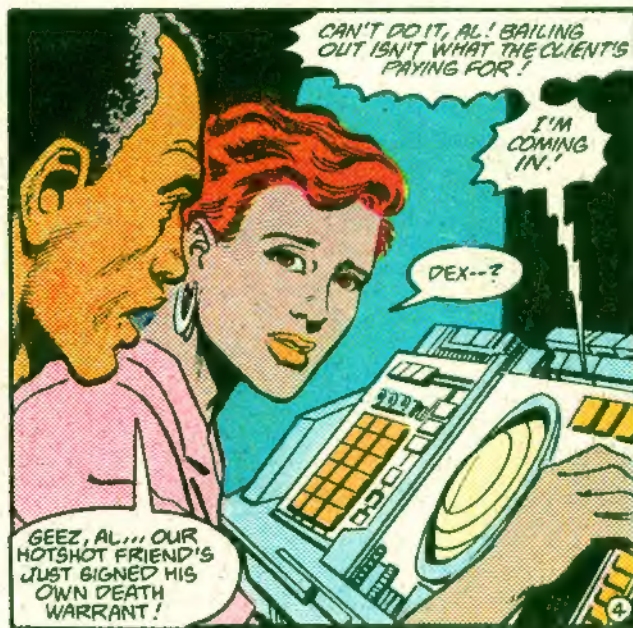
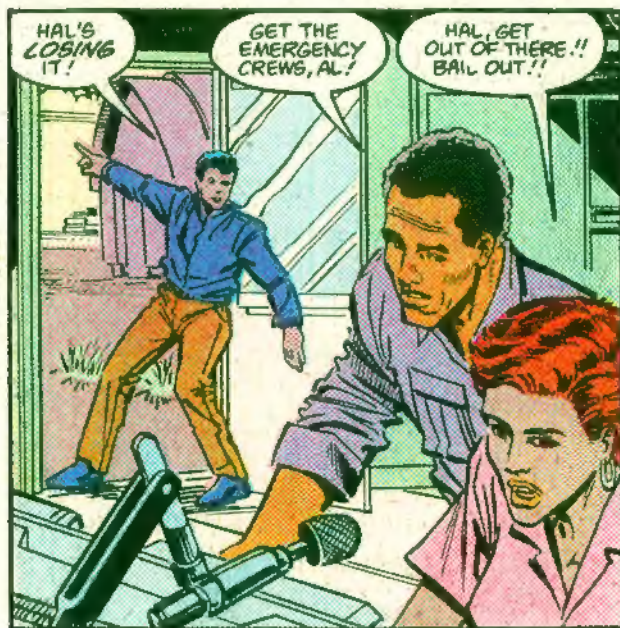
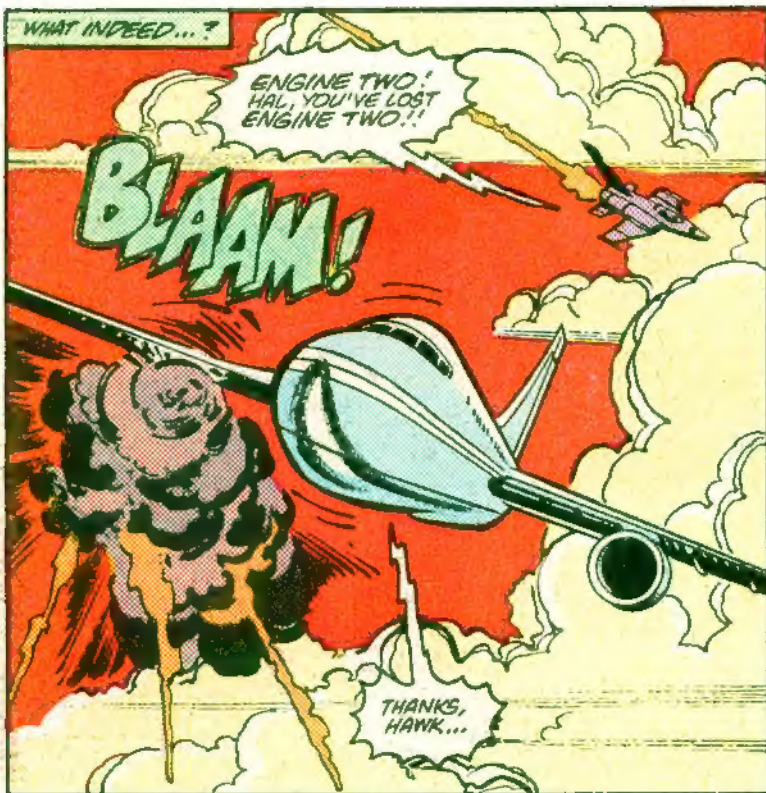
-- AND MAKE ALL 600 CREWMEN INTO COSMIC REFUGEES!

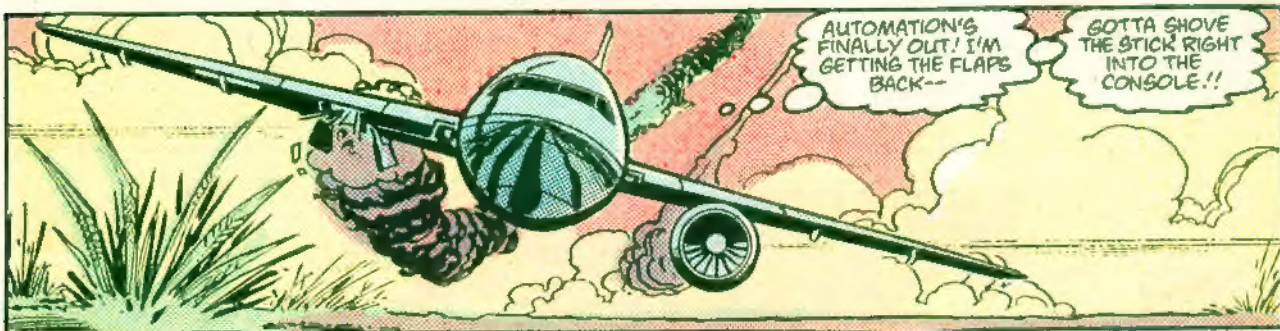
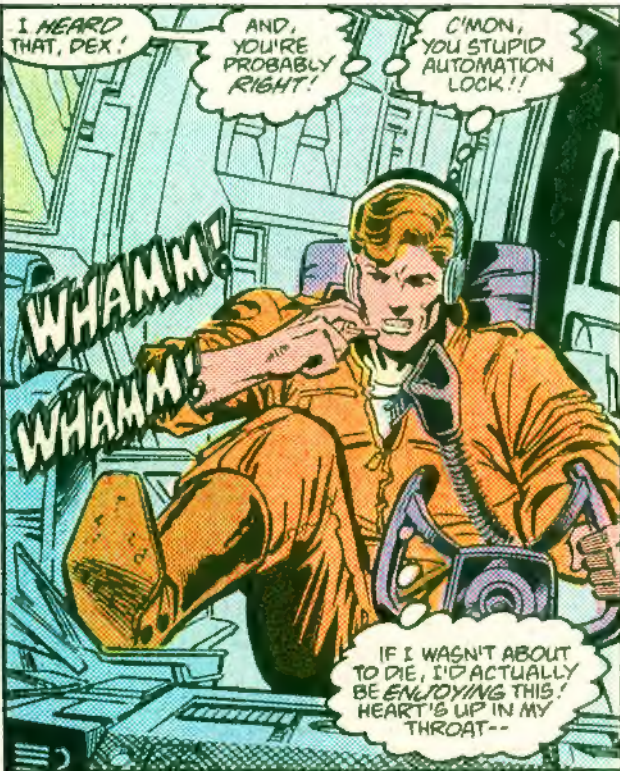
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! I'LL GIVE THE SHIP A LITTLE BOOST TO GET OUT OF SOL'S GRAVITY BELT--

-- AND THEN HIGH-TAIL IT TO LOS ANGELES!

I'M LATE FOR WORK!







IF I MEET MY MAKER I'LL BLAME ELITE... THE GREMLINS... THE CLIENTS WHO ARE ABOUT TO BUY AIRCRAFT FLEETS.

WE TEST 'EM AND FERRET OUT ANY PECULIAR DESIGN FLAWS... LIKE EXPLODING ENGINES!

HAWK'S IN THE CHASE PLANE, SNAPPING LIVE FOOTAGE OF THE FLIGHT! ONCE THE RESULTS ARE IN...

... THAT KID CHIP WILL DESIGN ANY NEEDED MODIFICATIONS. THEN DEX, OUR ENGINEER, WILL BUILD THE NEW STUFF AND INSTALL IT ON THE PROTOTYPE!

THIS WAY, OUR CLIENT SAVES MILLIONS IN REFITTING AND DOWN TIME COSTS!

THING IS, THIS DEAL ONLY WORKS IF I BRING THE BIRD DOWN IN ONE PIECE!

I'VE GOT ENOUGH LIFT. TIME TO KILL THAT OTHER ENGINE.

THIS ISN'T GONNA BE PRETTY...

HARD TO STABILIZE THIS THING.

HOPE THE LANDING GEAR IS DOWN...

HE'S DOWN!! HAL DID IT!!

SONOVAGLIN!!



YOU HAVE ANY
IDEA HOW MUCH
YOU FRIGHTENED
US?

VERY
FUNNY,
CHIP.

YEAH, HAL.
AL'S GOT A
NEW DRESS
EARMARKED
FOR HER CUT
OF OUR
COMMISSION!

VICIOUS STICK WORK,
DUDE. ALMOST AS
GOOD AS ME.

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN
ALMOST,
HAWK?

THAT WAS SIX MILLION
DOLLARS WORTH OF
GENERAL ELECTRIC
ENGINE YOU BLEW
UP, HAL!

SOME BIG
PROBLEMS WITH
THIS BIRD!

ALL RIGHT,
TEAM...LET'S
GET ON IT!



MOMENTS LATER...

THE GREMLINS ARE
STRIPPING THE AUTO
SYSTEM DOWN TO
FIND THE CAUSE OF
THE ENGINE FAILURE!

75 HUNDRED BUCKS
FOR A COUPLE HOURS'
WORK!

THIS IS A
GREAT
DEAL!

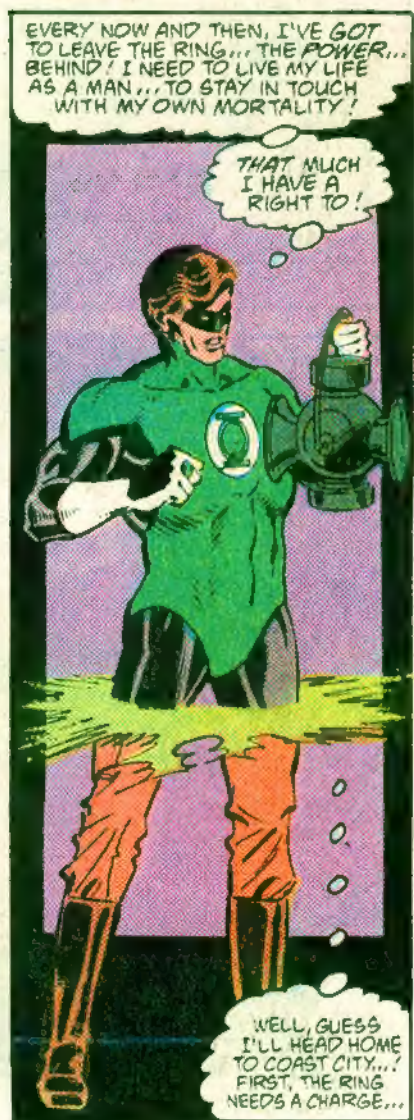
WELL, I MADE
IT IN ONE PIECE...
WITHOUT MY RING!
AND, I'VE GOT TO
ADMIT...



...I HAD A
BLAST!
MAN, THAT
WAS FUN!

THE TRUTH IS,
WHILE THE POWER
RING LIBERATES
ME TO RACE AMONG
THE STARS...

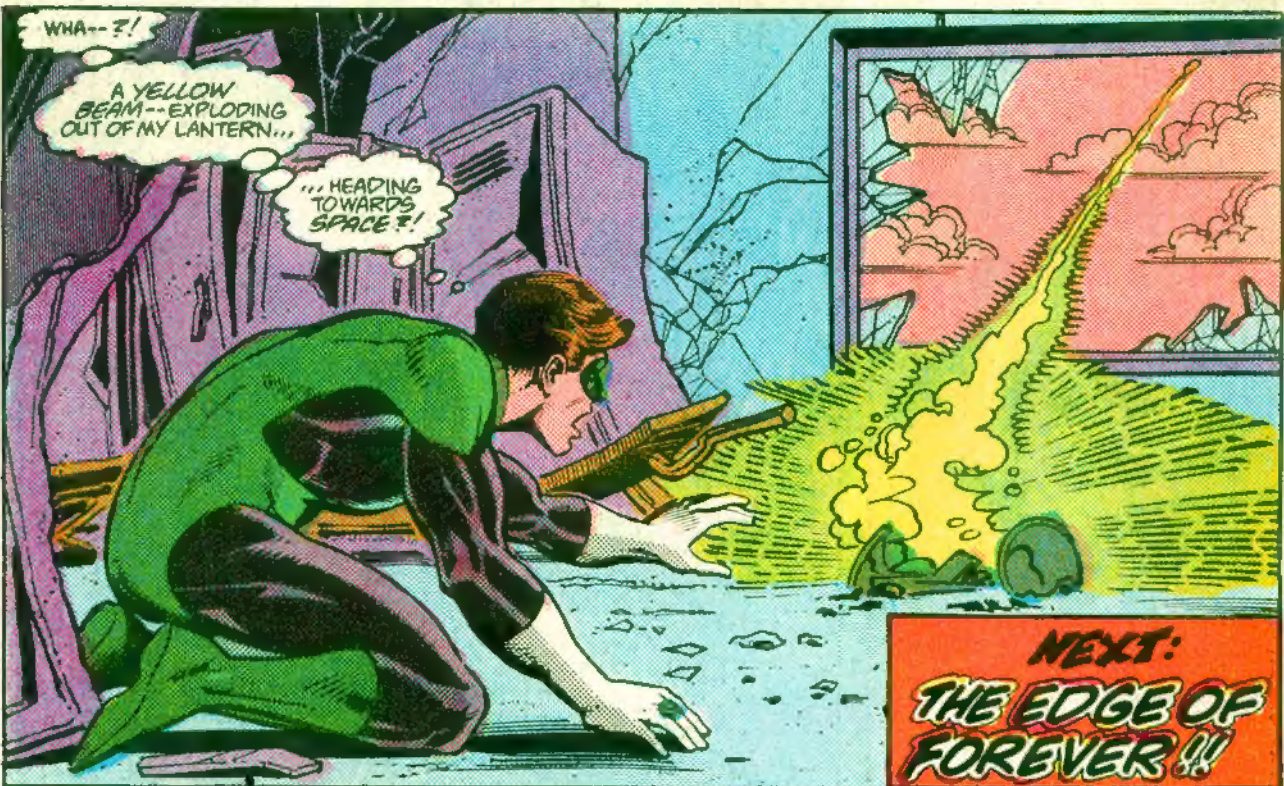
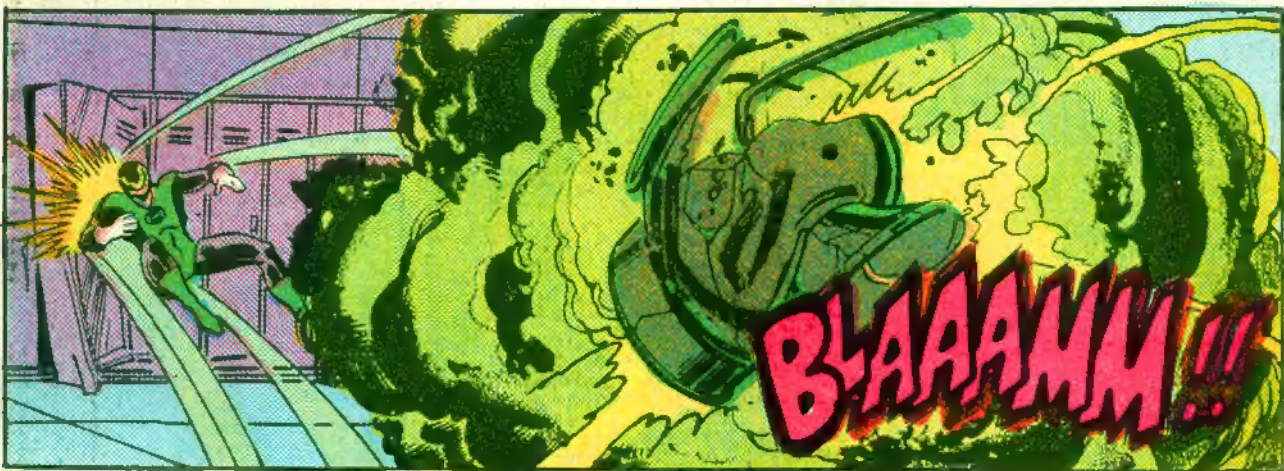
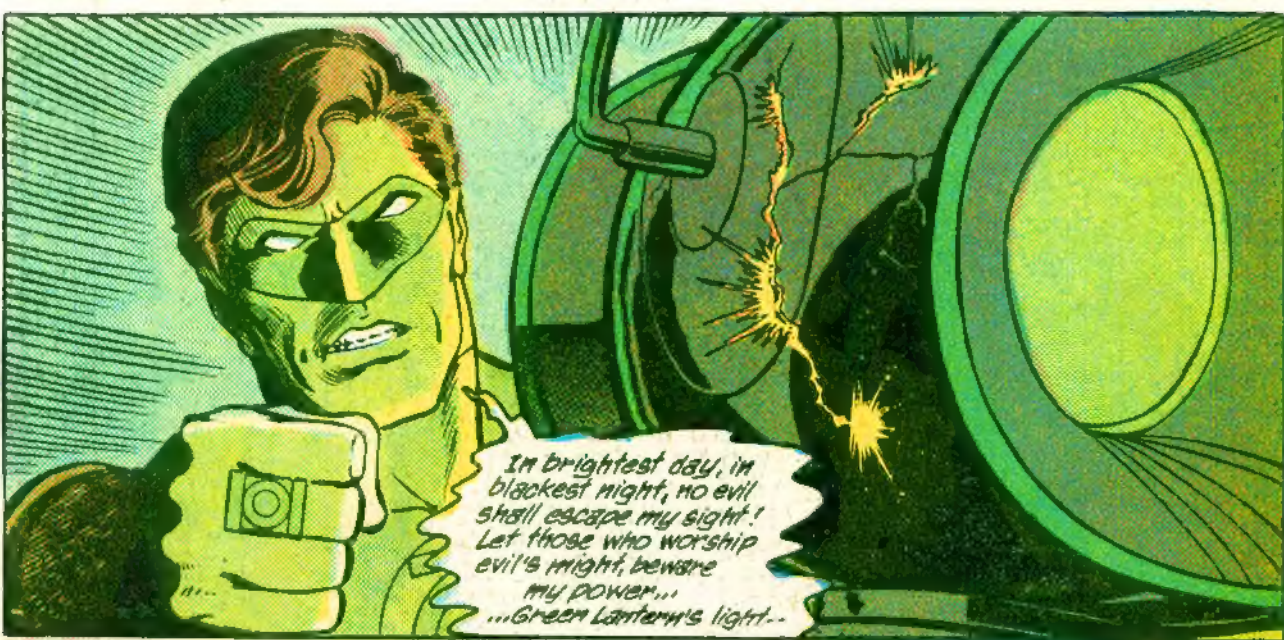
...IT ALSO
INSULATES
ME FROM
THE REAL
WORLD!



EVERY NOW AND THEN, I'VE GOT
TO LEAVE THE RING... THE POWER...
BEHIND! I NEED TO LIVE MY LIFE
AS A MAN... TO STAY IN TOUCH
WITH MY OWN MORTALITY!

THAT MUCH
I HAVE A
RIGHT TO!

WELL, GUESS
I'LL HEAD HOME
TO COAST CITY...
FIRST, THE RING
NEEDS A CHARGE...



WILD DOG

FATAL DISTRACTION



Chapter Seven:

STAB in the DARK

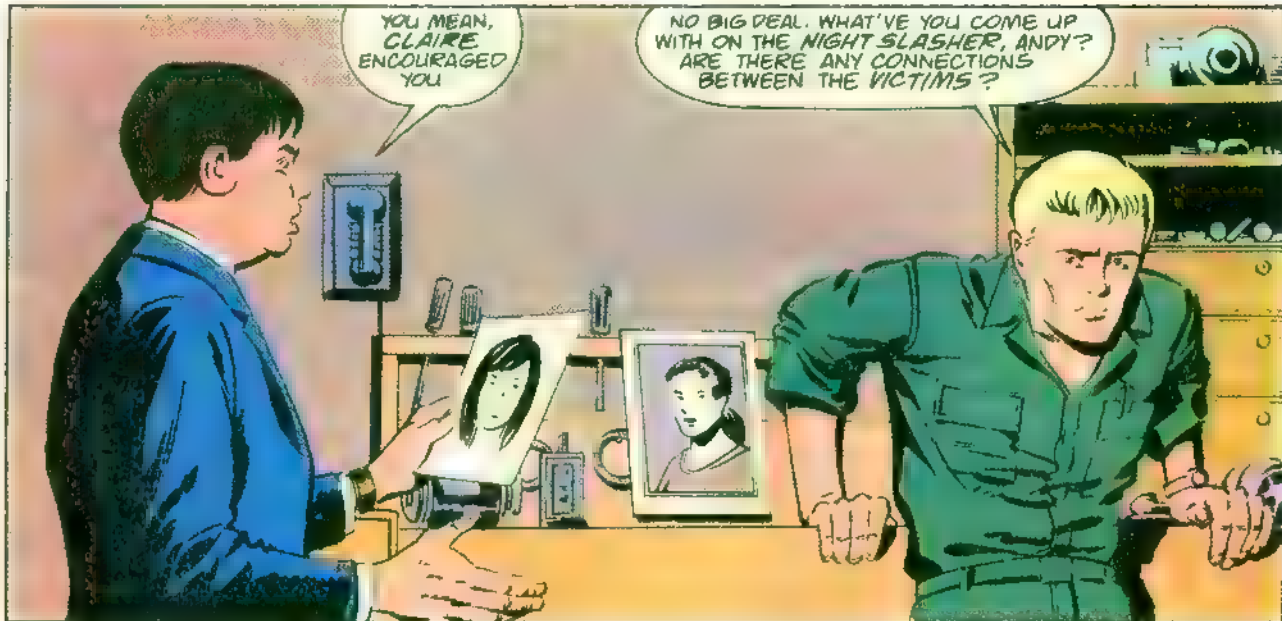
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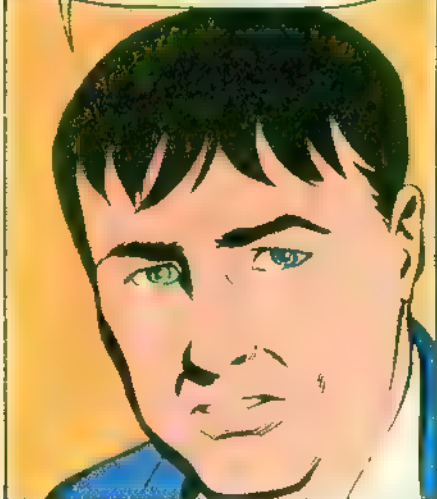




YOU MEAN,
CLAIRE
ENCOURAGED
YOU

NO BIG DEAL. WHAT'VE YOU COME UP
WITH ON THE NIGHT SLASHER, ANDY?
ARE THERE ANY CONNECTIONS
BETWEEN THE VICTIMS?

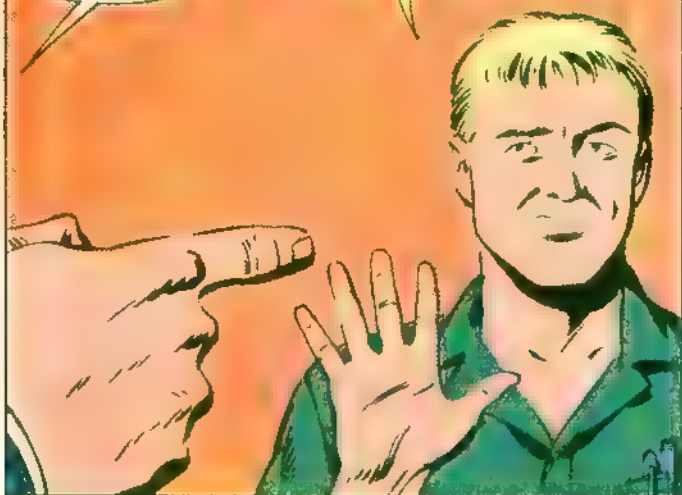
JACK, I AM LOOKING INTO THE
CASE, AND I'M MAKING SOME
HEADWAY. I DON'T WANT YOUR
HELP ON THIS. I DON'T NEED
YOUR HELP ON THIS.



"MAYBE THERE ARE TIMES WHEN A
WILD DOG CAN DO THINGS THAT THE
POLICE CAN'T. MAYBE THAT'S WHY I
ALLOWED MYSELF TO GET SUCKED
INTO THIS CRAZY CRUSADE OF YOURS."

BUT THIS
IS A MURDER
CASE. LEAVE
IT TO THE
EXPERTS.

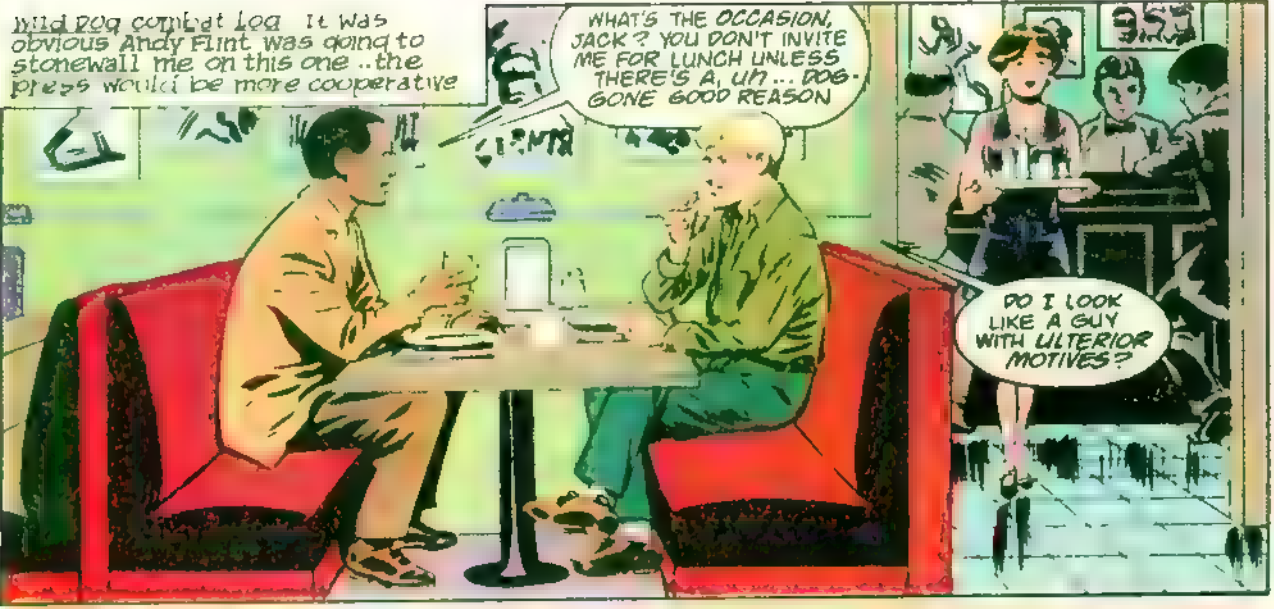
THOSE SAME "EXPERTS" THAT
ARE TRIPPING OVER CORPSES?
YOU GOT FIVE VICTIMS,
LIEUTENANT



JACK, I'M NOT ASKING
YOU, I'M TELLING YOU...
STAY THE HELL OUT OF
THIS ONE! I COVERED
YOUR TAIL TODAY-NOW,
DO ME THIS SMALL
FAVOR!



Wild Dog combat log It was obvious Andy Flint was going to stonewall me on this one ..the press would be more cooperative

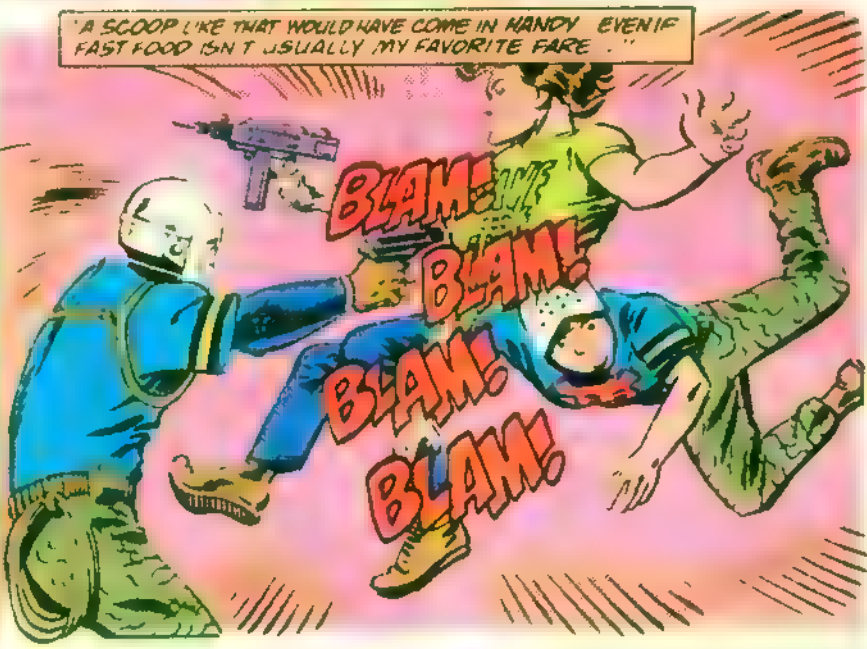


WHAT'S THE OCCASION, JACK? YOU DON'T INVITE ME FOR LUNCH UNLESS THERE'S A, UH... DOG-GONE GOOD REASON

DO I LOOK LIKE A GUY WITH ULTERIOR MOTIVES?



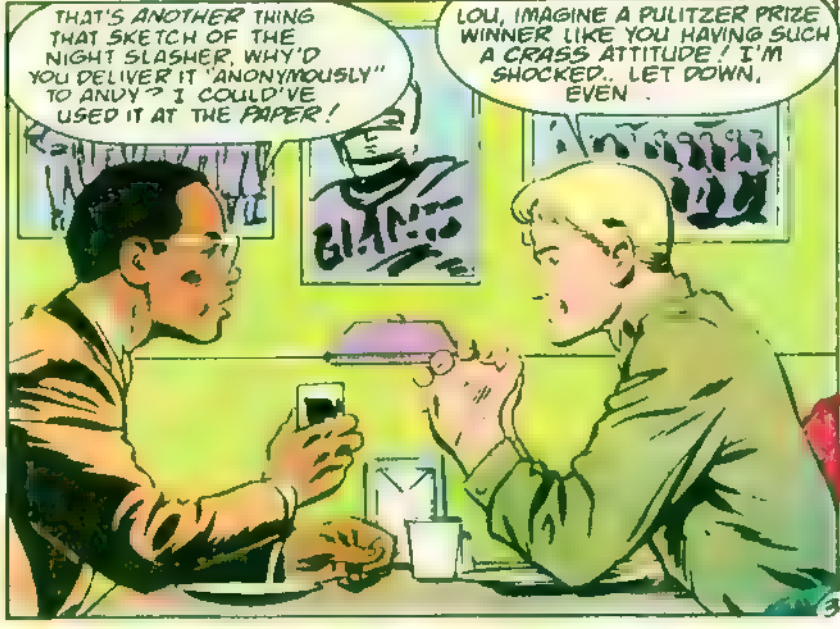
YES AND IF YOU'RE GOING TO INVOLVE ME IN YOUR MADNESS, YOU MIGHT AT LEAST HAVE INVITED ME TO LUNCH YESTERDAY.



"A SCOOP LIKE THAT WOULD HAVE COME IN HANDY EVEN IF FAST FOOD ISN'T USUALLY MY FAVORITE FARE..."



DOES FILET OF NIGHT SLASHER APPEAL TO YOUR APPETITE?

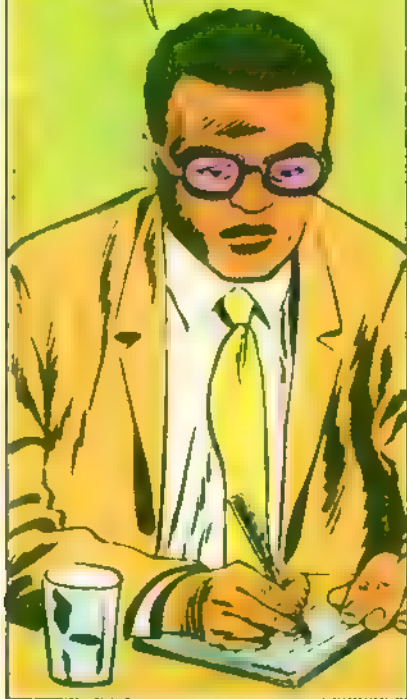


THAT'S ANOTHER THING THAT SKETCH OF THE NIGHT SLASHER, WHY'D YOU DELIVER IT "ANONYMOUSLY" TO ANDY? I COULD'VE USED IT AT THE PAPER!

LOU, IMAGINE A PULITZER PRIZE WINNER LIKE YOU HAVING SUCH A CRASS ATTITUDE! I'M SHOCKED.. LET DOWN, EVEN

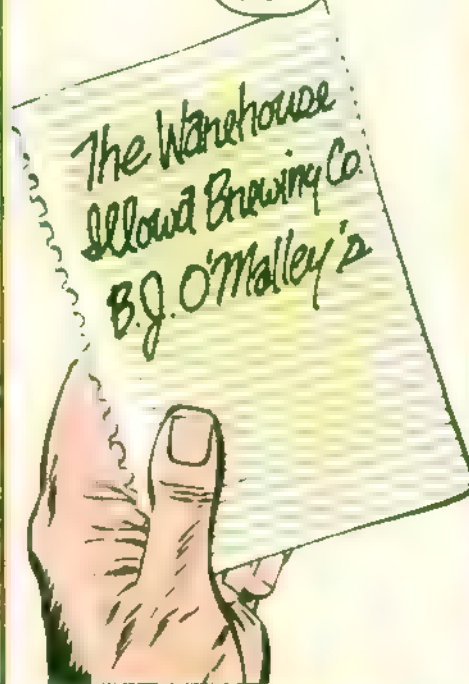
When I explained how Andy had clammed up on me

I'VE BEEN DOING SOME DIGGING OF MY OWN. ANDY MAY HAVE THIS AS WELL, BUT...



THOSE ARE THE THREE NIGHT SPOTS THAT WERE COMMON TO ALL FIVE VICTIMS

THIS IS HELPFUL THANKS, LOU.



There are many singles bars in the cities, that all five men had frequented these three might be significant



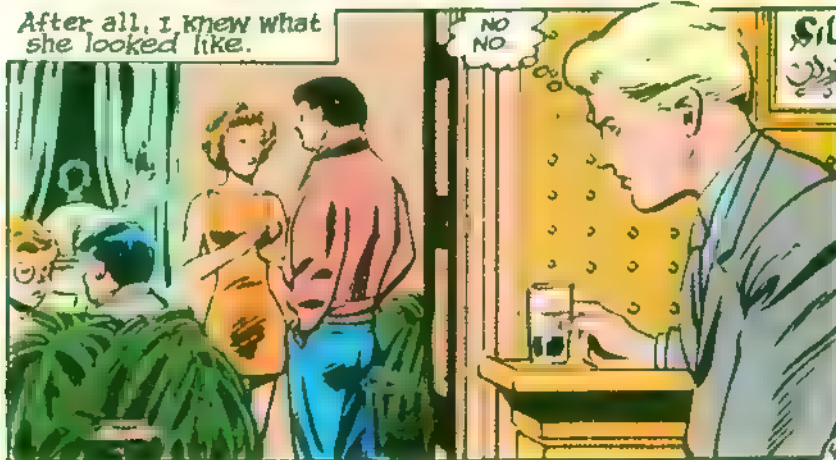
But patrolling these three bars would be a problem. They were spread out across the cities - two on the Iowa side, another in Illinois.

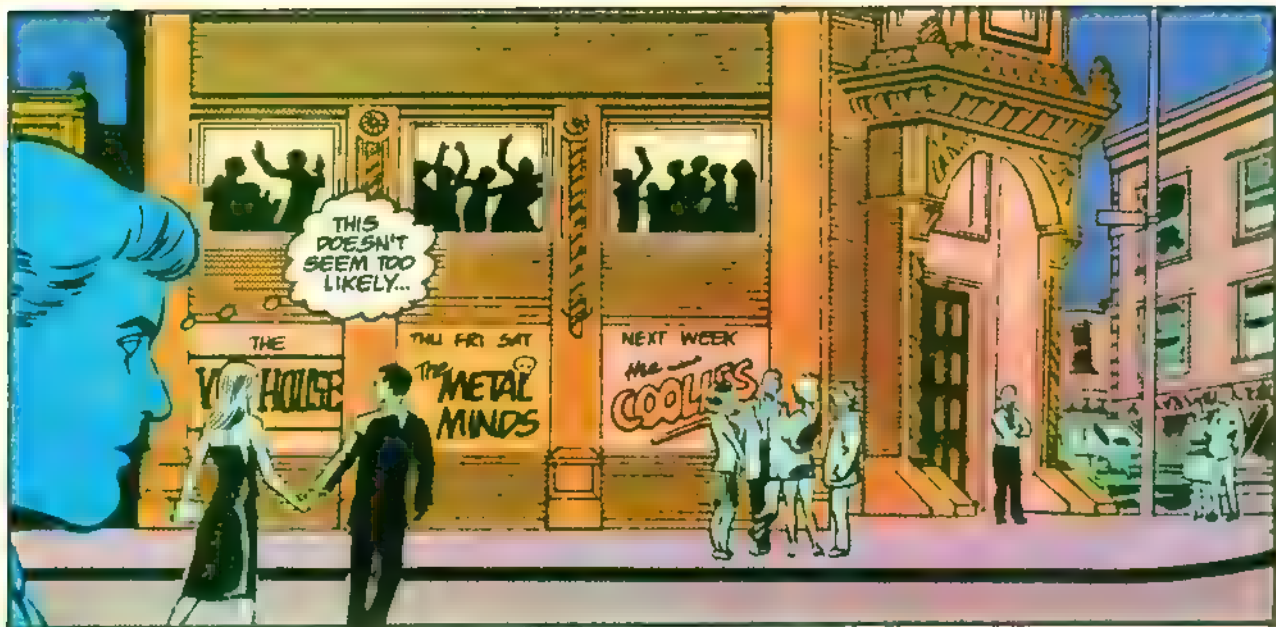


I would have to tackle one bar at a time... and from the inside.



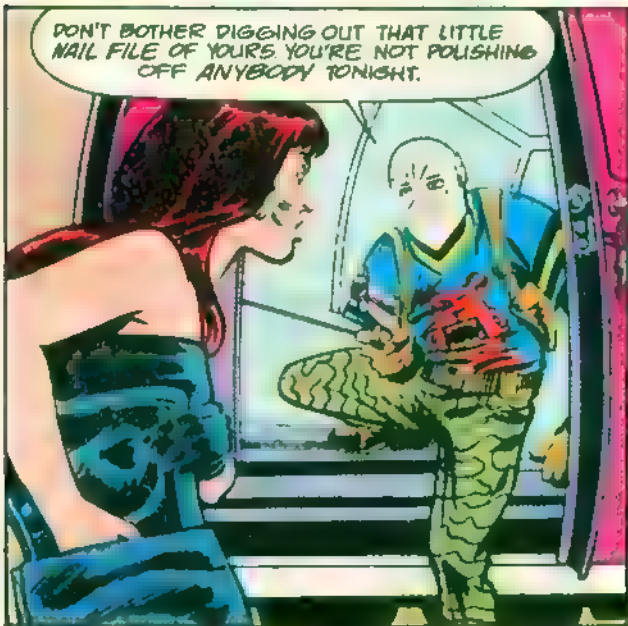
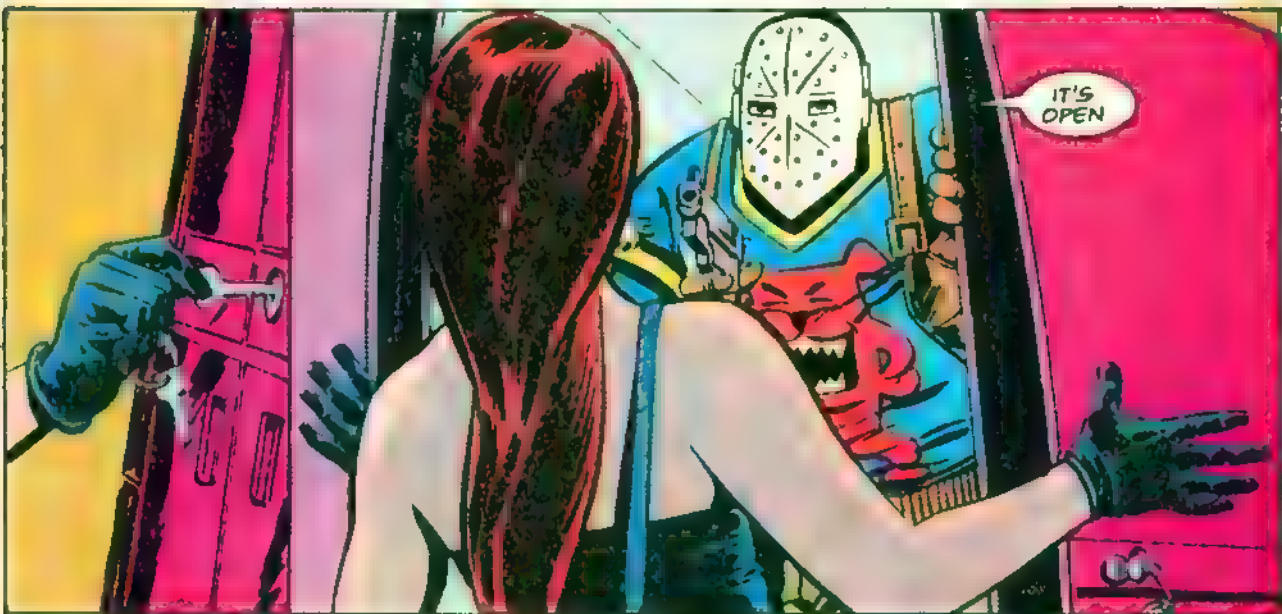
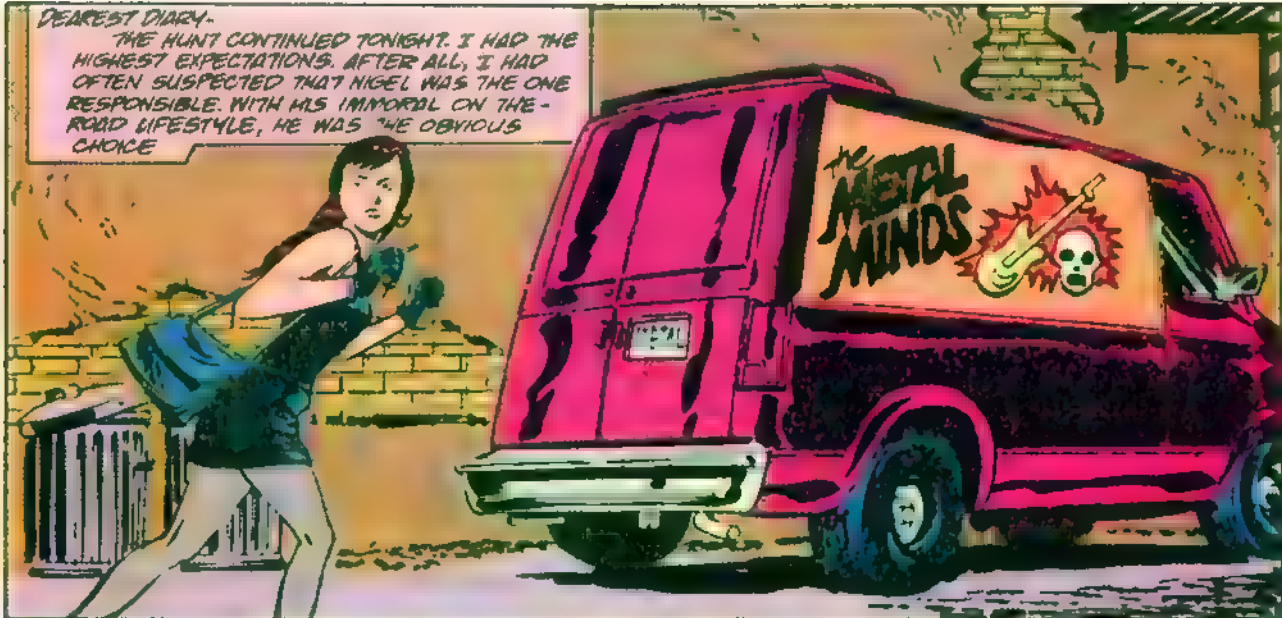
After all, I knew what she looked like.

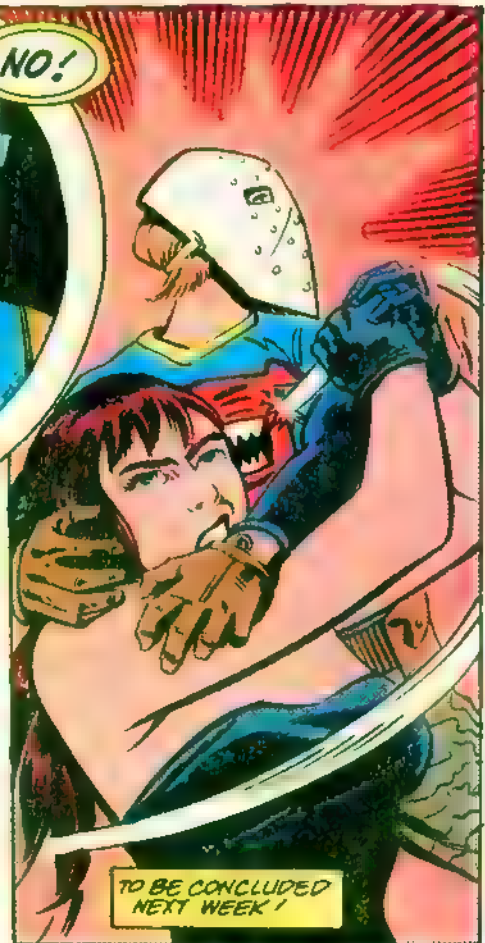
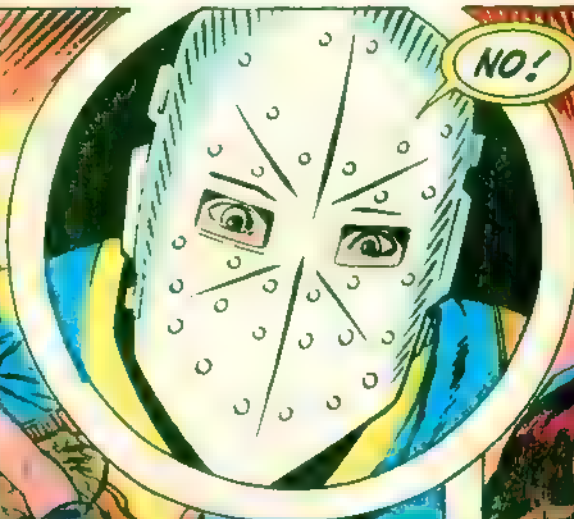




DEAREST DIARY-

THE HUNT CONTINUED TONIGHT. I HAD THE HIGHEST EXPECTATIONS. AFTER ALL, I HAD OFTEN SUSPECTED THAT NIGEL WAS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE. WITH HIS IMMORAL ON-THE-ROAD LIFESTYLE, HE WAS THE OBVIOUS CHOICE





JULY 8, 10:21 P.M.,
EASTERN TIME

ABRAHAMS RECOMMENDS
WE TERMINATE THE
UNIVERSITY PEOPLE,
NOW THAT WE HAVE THE
V74 REPORT...

...AND I AGREE
NO GREAT HURRY
ON THAT, THOUGH,
PETERSON.



...EXCEPT... HE SEEMS TO THINK THIS
KID-- TRAEGER -- WAS COME TO
SOME CONCLUSIONS THAT ARE MORE
ACCURATE THAN WE'RE COMFORTABLE
WITH.

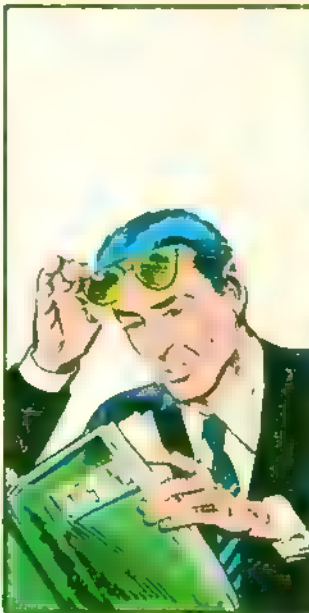
I'M AFRAID THERE'S
MORE TO IT THAN THAT
SIR. THAT MYSTERIOUS
DISEASE THAT'S BEEN
IN THE NEWS?--

WE JUST GOT THE
CONFIRMATION FROM
ATLANTA: IT'S V74.
ALL RIGHT.



IT GOT
OUT OF THE
LAB?!

I'M AFRAID SO,
SIR. AND... AND IT'S
TRAEGER'S FAULT
IT'S ALL IN THE
REPORT...



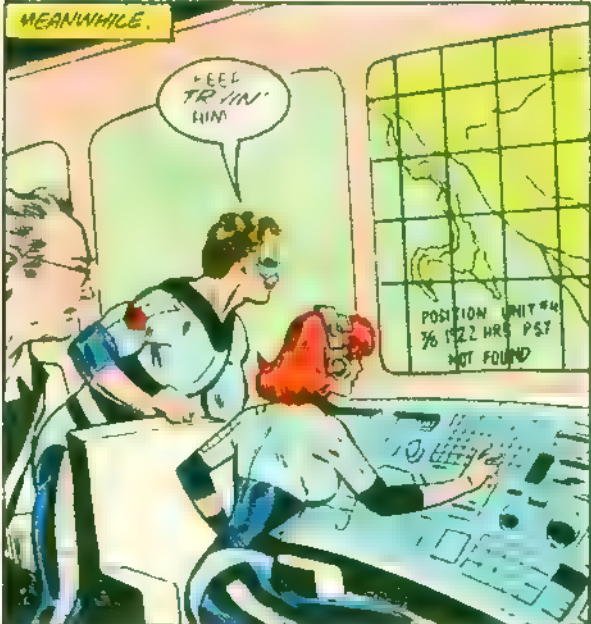
WASTE
HIM



MEANWHILE.

"FEEL
TR'IN'
HIM

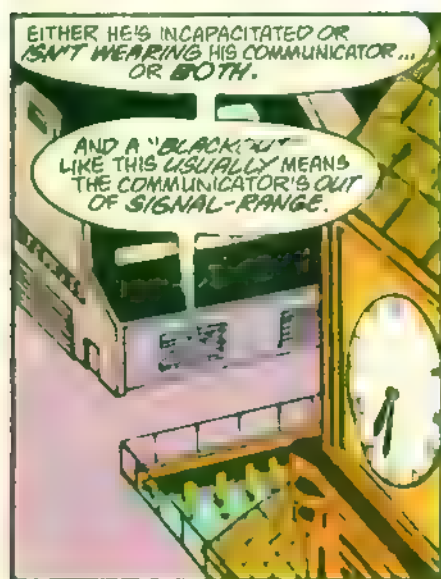
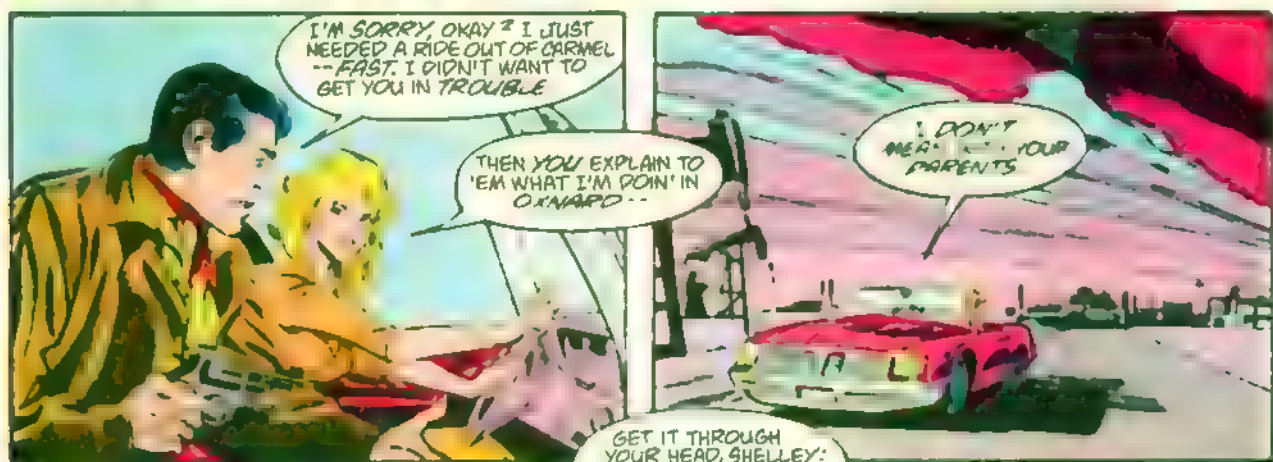
POSITION UNIT 4
36 1522 HRS PST
NOT FOUND

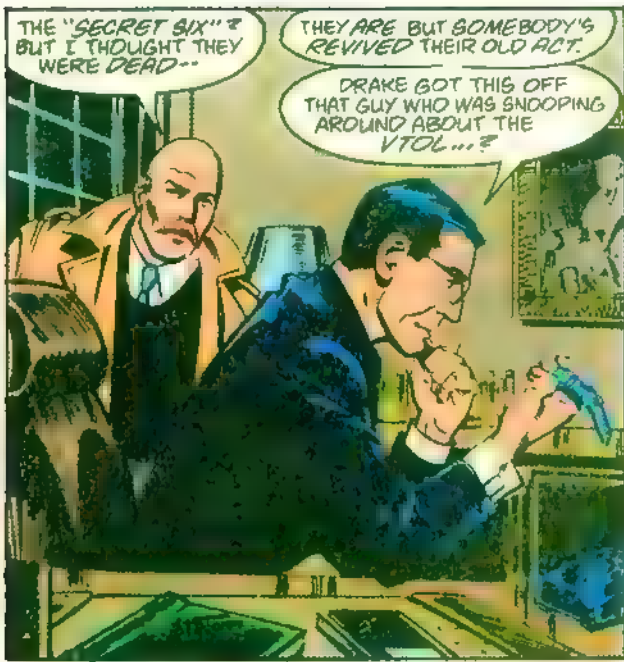


HOW, VIC? THERE'S NO
RESPONSE ON THE FREQUENCY,
AND I DON'T EVEN HAVE A
COMM-READING.

HE WAS DUE TO
CHECK IN AT
1430 HOURS...







THE "SECRET SIX"? BUT I THOUGHT THEY WERE DEAD...

THEY ARE BUT SOMEBODY'S REVIVED THEIR OLD ACT.

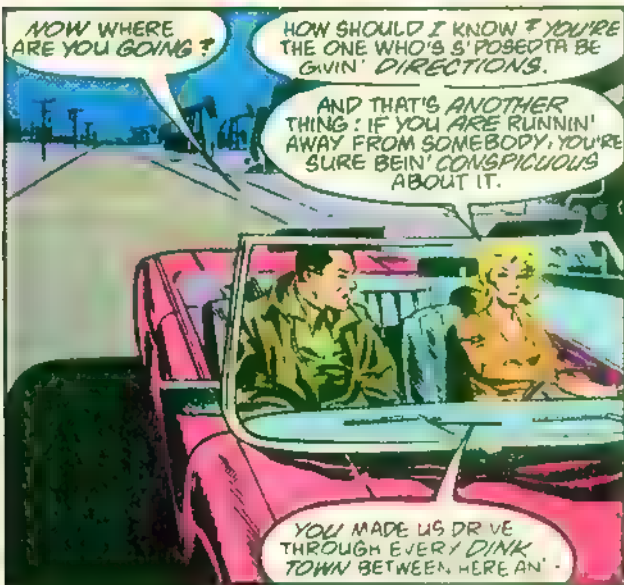
DRAKE GOT THIS OFF THAT GUY WHO WAS SNOOPING AROUND ABOUT THE VTOL...?



YESSIR. THE GUY GOT AWAY BUT WE HAVE A DETAIL ON HIM...

GOOD TELL 'EM TO HURRY 'TIL I'M A LITTLE

WHEN THEY'RE FINISHED, I WANT TO SEE THE BODY, PERSONALLY.

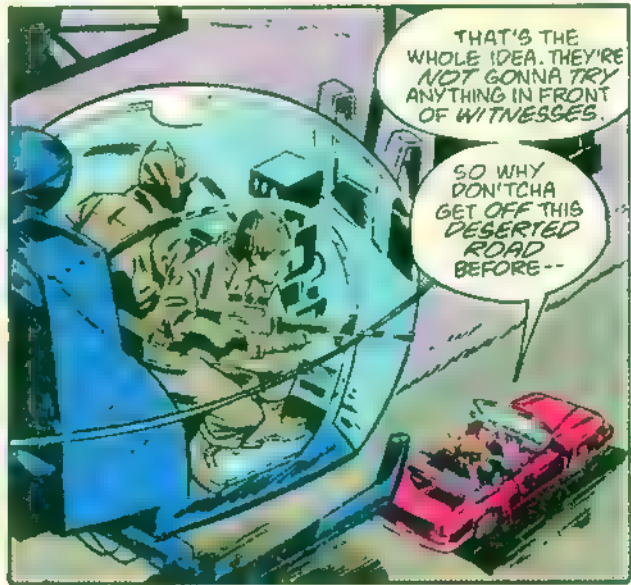


NOW WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

HOW SHOULD I KNOW? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S SUPPOSED TO BE GIVIN' DIRECTIONS.

AND THAT'S ANOTHER THING: IF YOU ARE RUNNIN' AWAY FROM SOMEBODY, YOU'RE SURE BEIN' CONSPICUOUS ABOUT IT.

YOU MADE US DRIVE THROUGH EVER / DINK TOWN BETWEEN HERE AN'



THAT'S THE WHOLE IDEA. THEY'RE NOT GONNA TRY ANYTHING IN FRONT OF WITNESSES.

SO WHY DON'TCHA GET OFF THIS DESERTED ROAD BEFORE--

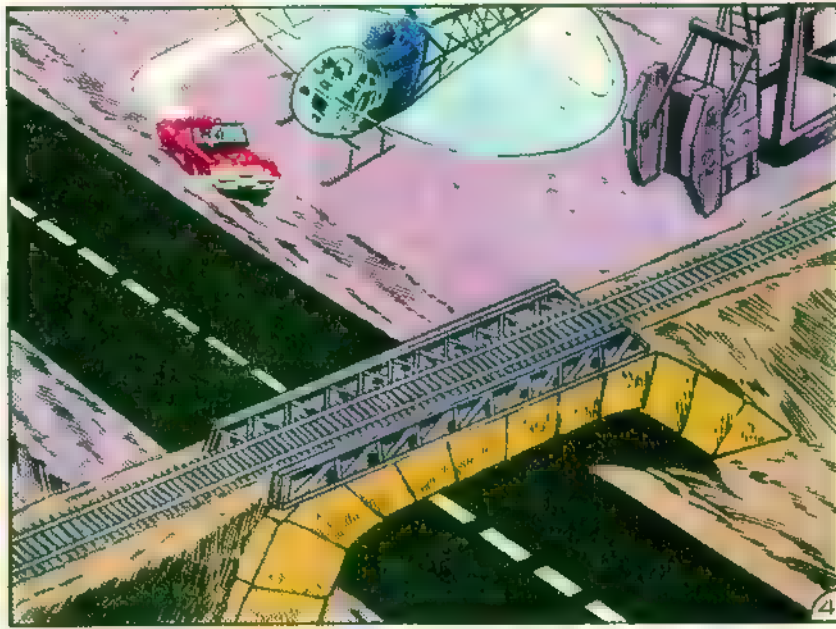
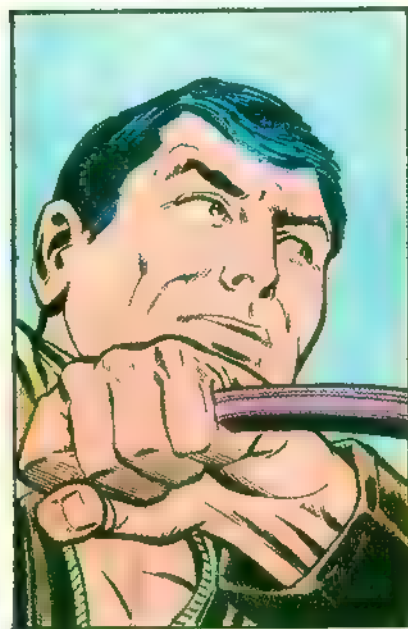
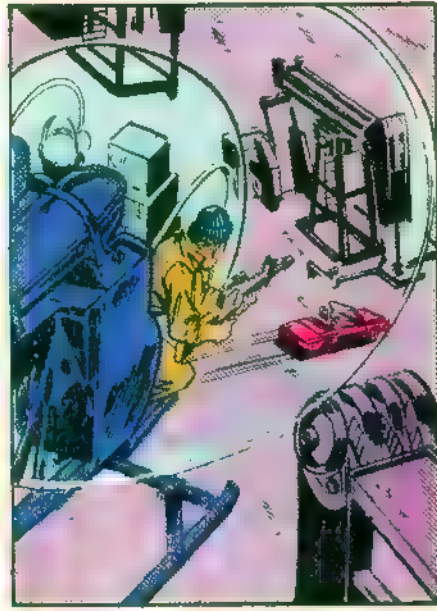
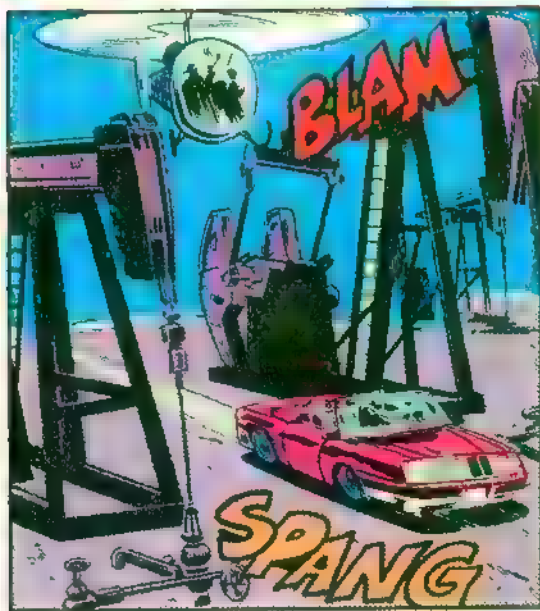
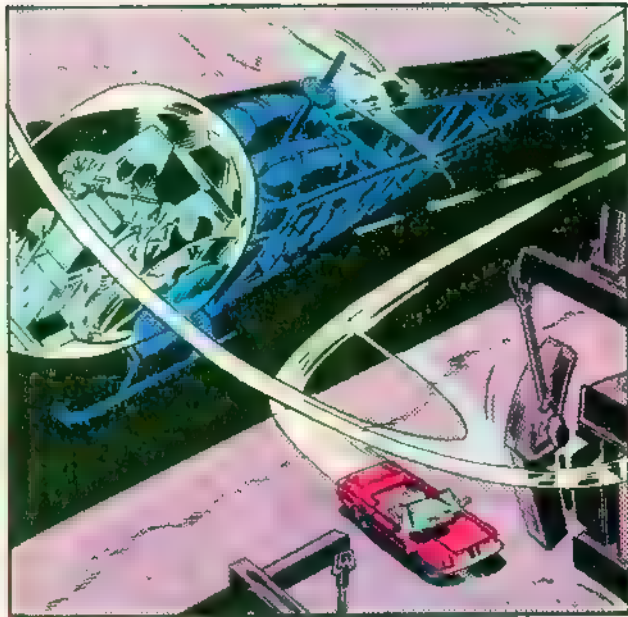


YEAH-- AND I'D SAY "I TOLD YOU SO," ONLY I'M MORE INTERESTED...

...IN STAYING ALIVE!

HOLY GEEZE! THAT WAS A--

SPEED





BOOM!

THE SECRET SIX!

WRITTEN BY
MARTIN PASKO
ART BY
FRANK SPRINGER &
FRANK McLAUGHLIN
COLORED BY
CARL SAFFORD
LETTERED BY
ALBERT DE SUZMAN
EDITED BY
ROBERT GREENBERGER

**GUESS WHAT
WE LEARNED IN
SCHOOL TODAY?**

...SO THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT TONY. WE CAN ONLY WAIT... AND HOPE WE HEAR FROM HIM.

WHAT'S OUR STATUS RIGHT NOW, MARIA?

MITCH IS ON PERSONAL LEAVE TILL THE END OF THE WEEK...

...WHICH LEAVES YOU AND LUKE TO BACK UP LADONNA-- IF AND WHEN SHE NEEDS YOU SHE SHOULD BE CHECKING IN SOON.

GIVE ME A TRANSCRIPT OF HER LAST REPORT.

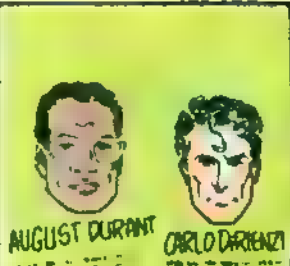
COMING RIGHT UP...

WHAT INTRIGUES ME ABOUT IT IS THAT ONE OF THE ORIGINAL SECRET SIX--AUGUST DURANT-- WAS INVOLVED IN SOME WAY WITH THIS VTA RESEARCH



HAVE WE BEEN ABLE TO VERIFY THAT?

NEGATIVE



AUGUST DURANT CARLO D'AMENZI



HOT WELVE



TIGER FORCE KING SAVAGE



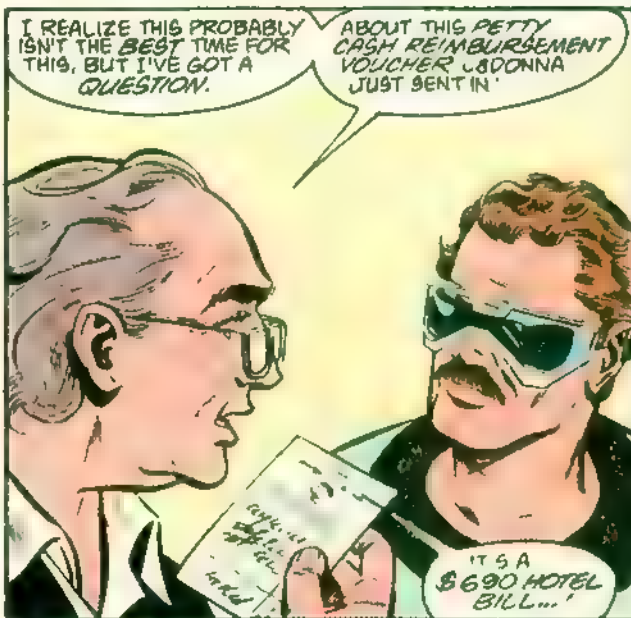
I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PIECE TOGETHER BIOS ON THEM FROM VARIOUS LIBRARY SOURCES...

...AND, ACCORDING TO WHAT I'VE FOUND, DURANT BECAME A PROFESSOR OF PHYSICS AT JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY...



...AFTER SPENDING SEVERAL YEARS WORKING FOR THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT BUT THERE'S NO RECORD OF A CONNECTION BETWEEN DURANT AND ANY RESEARCH IN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY BEING CARRIED ON THERE.

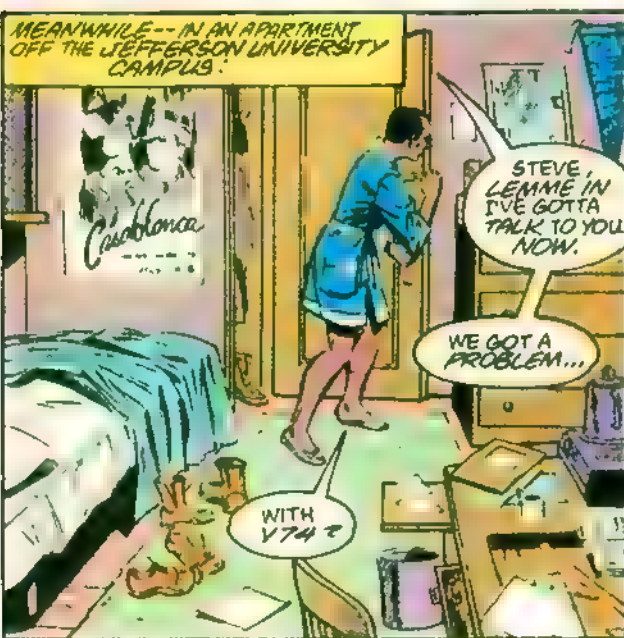
UH, EXCUSE ME, PEOPLE...



I REALIZE THIS PROBABLY ISN'T THE BEST TIME FOR THIS, BUT I'VE GOT A QUESTION.

ABOUT THIS PETTY CASH REIMBURSEMENT VOUCHER LADONNA JUST SENT IN?

IT'S A \$690 HOTEL BILL...



MEANWHILE-- IN AN APARTMENT OFF THE JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS:

STEVE, LET ME IN I'VE GOTTA TALK TO YOU NOW.

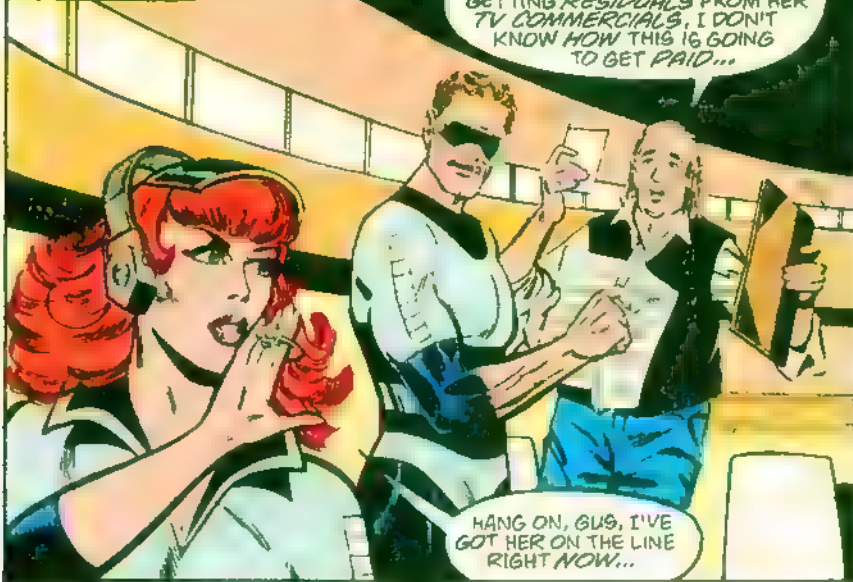
WE GOT A PROBLEM...

WITH VTA?



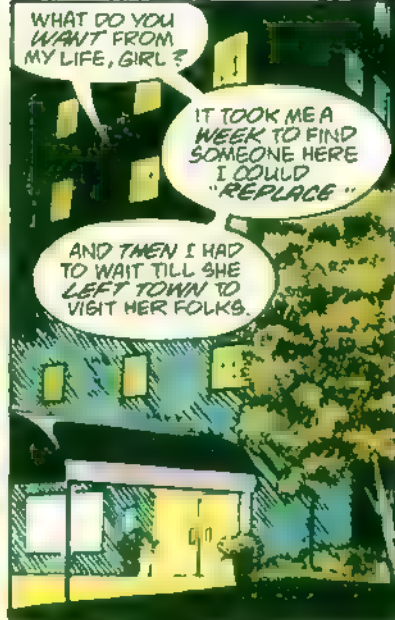
YEAH. AND THE PROBLEM, MY MAN, IS YOU.

MEANWHILE



"SO UNLESS LADONNA'S STILL GETTING RESIDUALS FROM HER TV COMMERCIALS, I DON'T KNOW HOW THIS IS GOING TO GET PAID..."

HANG ON, GUS, I'VE GOT HER ON THE LINE RIGHT NOW...



WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM MY LIFE, GIRL?

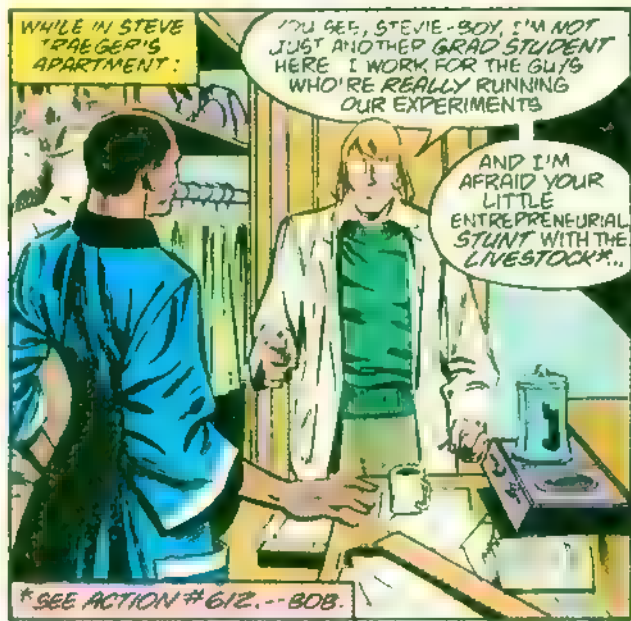
IT TOOK ME A WEEK TO FIND SOMEONE HERE I COULD "REPLACE"

AND THEN I HAD TO WAIT TILL SHE LEFT TOWN TO VISIT HER FOLKS.



MEANTIME, I HAD TO STAY SOMEWHERE.

... WE'LL SETTLE IT LATER, OKAY? RIGHT NOW THERE'S SOMETHIN' FUNKY GOIN' DOWN HERE...



WHILE IN STEVE 'DREAGER'S APARTMENT:

YOU SEE, STEVIE-BOY, I'M NOT JUST ANOTHER GRAD STUDENT HERE. I WORK FOR THE GUYS WHO'RE REALLY RUNNING OUR EXPERIMENTS

AND I'M AFRAID YOUR LITTLE ENTREPRENEURIAL STUNT WITH THE LIVESTOCK...

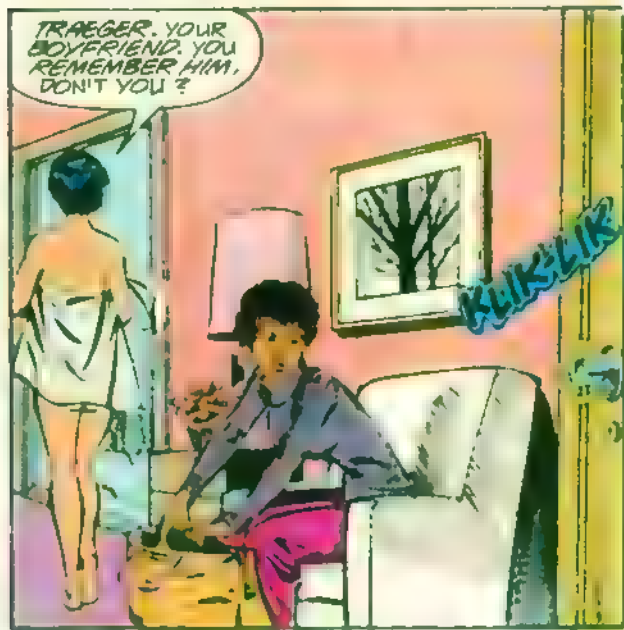
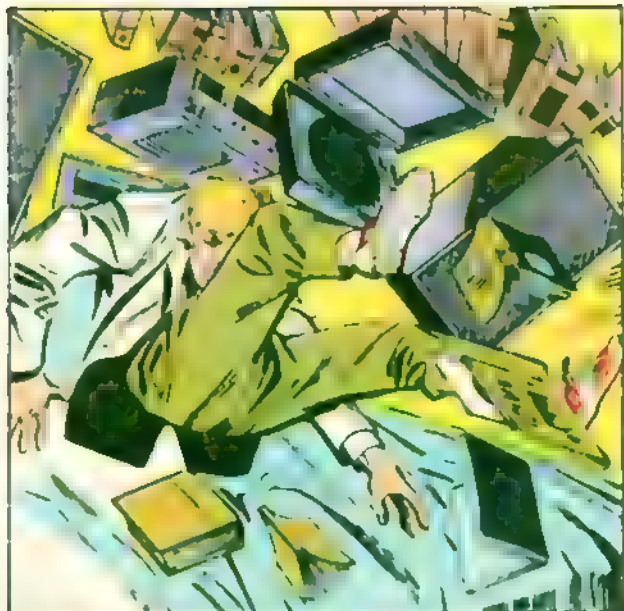
*SEE ACTION #612... BOB.



... SERIOUSLY COMPROMISED OUR WOR...

AAAGH!





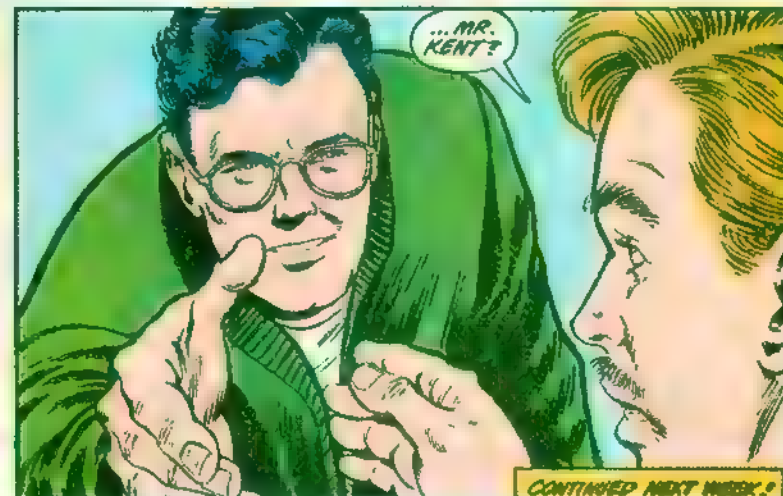
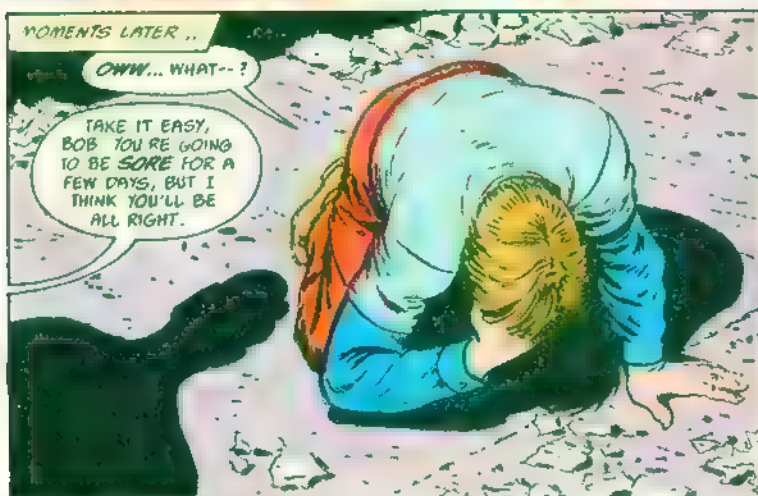
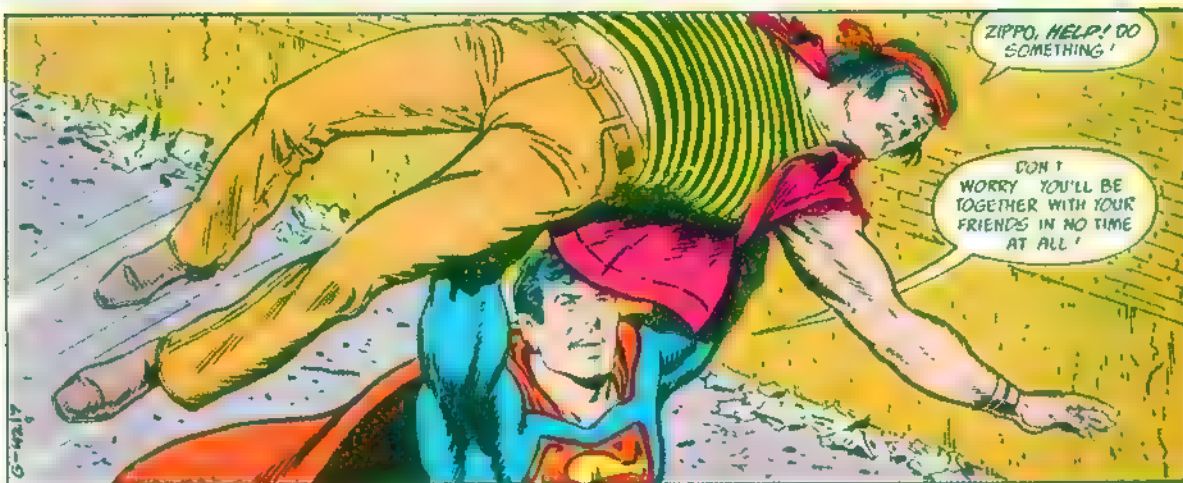
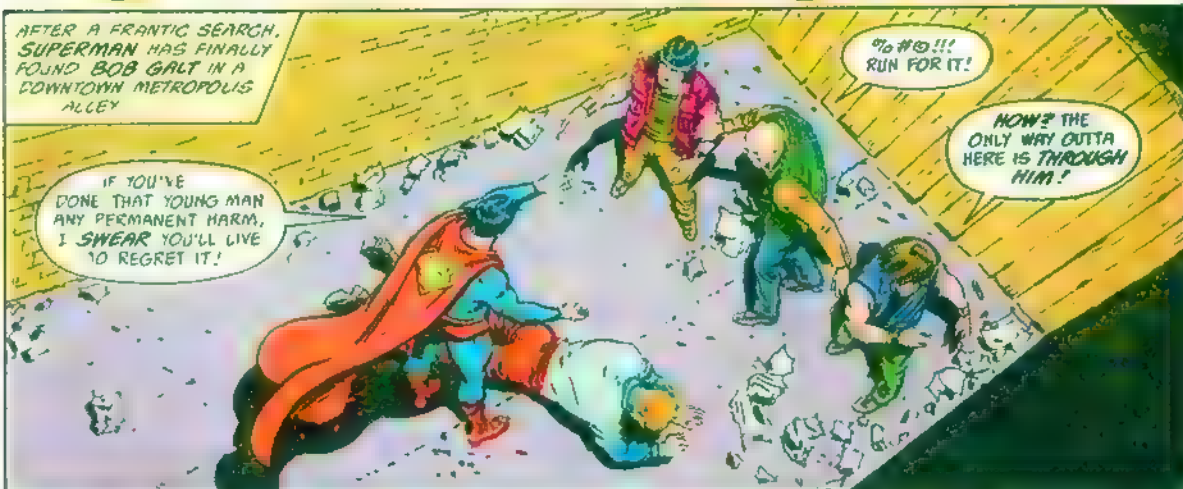
SUPERMAN

Created by
JERRY SEIGEL &
JOE SHUSTER

"LET THE FIT THE

PUNISHMENT CRIME"

ROGER STERN - WRITER
CURT SWAN - PENCILLER
MURPHY ANDERSON - INKER
BILL OAKLEY - LETTERER
TOM ZIUKO - COLORIST
MIKE CARLIN - EDITOR



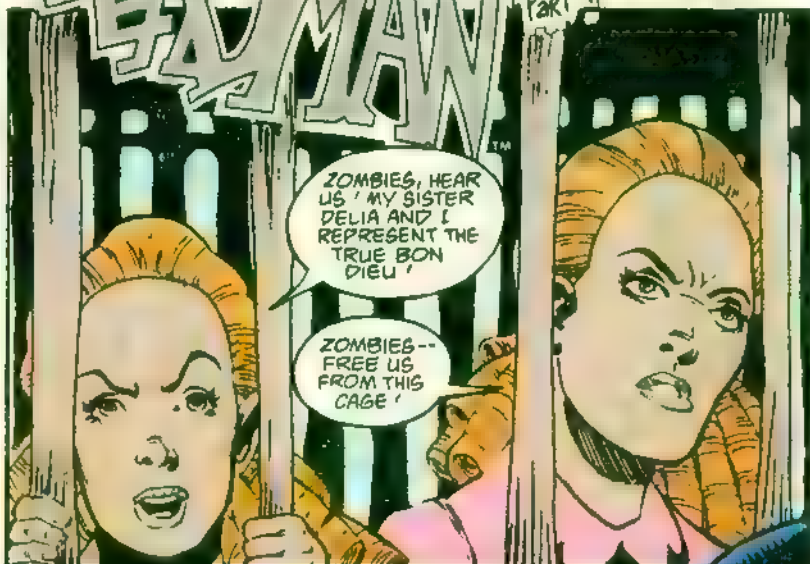


SCARY
STUFF
By **MIKE BARON**
KELLEY JONES

DEZUNIGA / MARCOS
INKER'S
ALBERT DEGUZMAN
LETTERER
DANIEL VOZZO
COLORIST
BARBARA KESEL
EDITOR

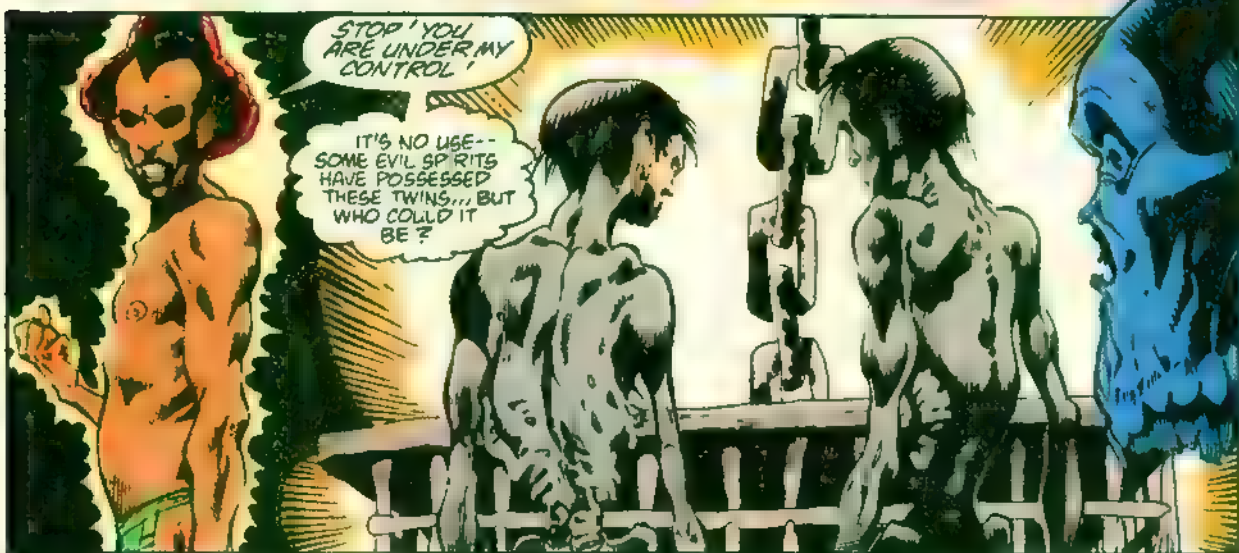
DEADMAN

Part 4



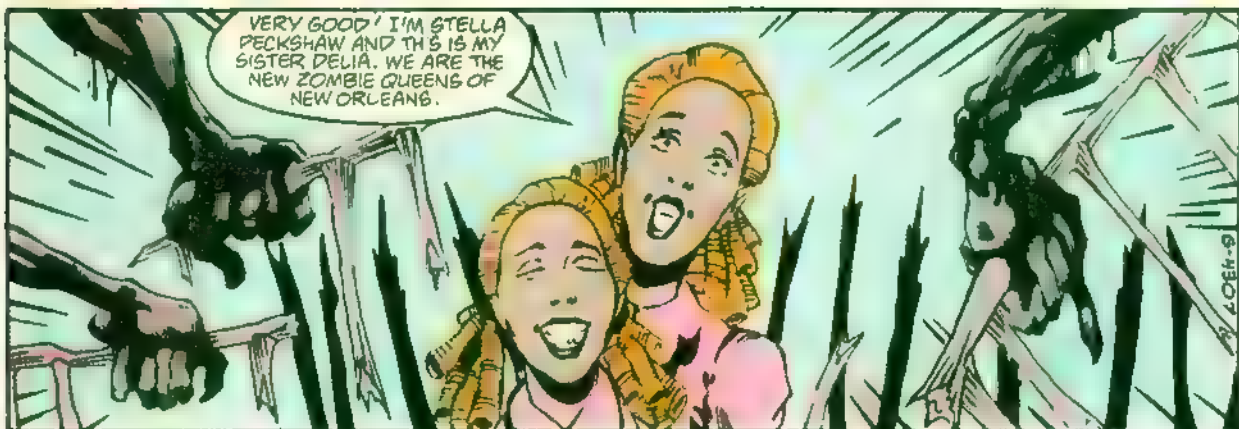
ZOMBIES, HEAR
US! MY SISTER
DELIA AND I
REPRESENT THE
TRUE BON
DIEU!

ZOMBIES--
FREE US
FROM THIS
CAGE!

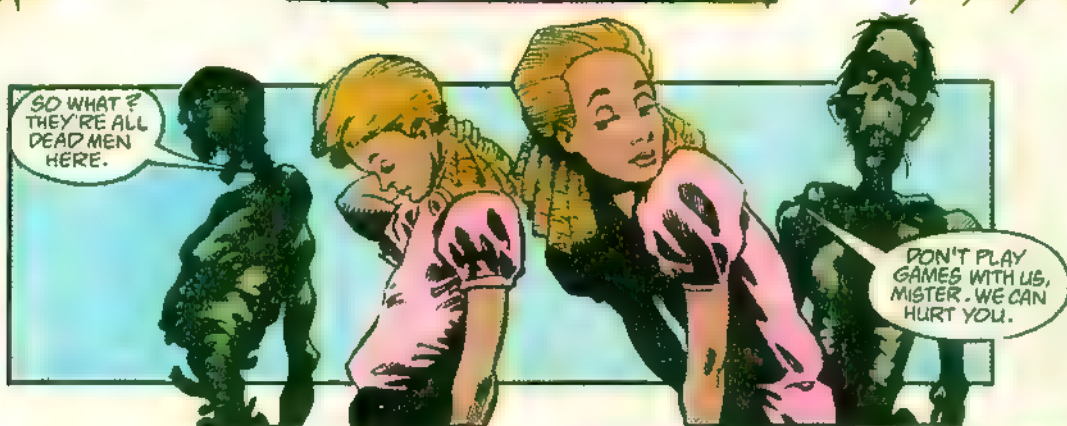


STOP! YOU
ARE UNDER MY
CONTROL!

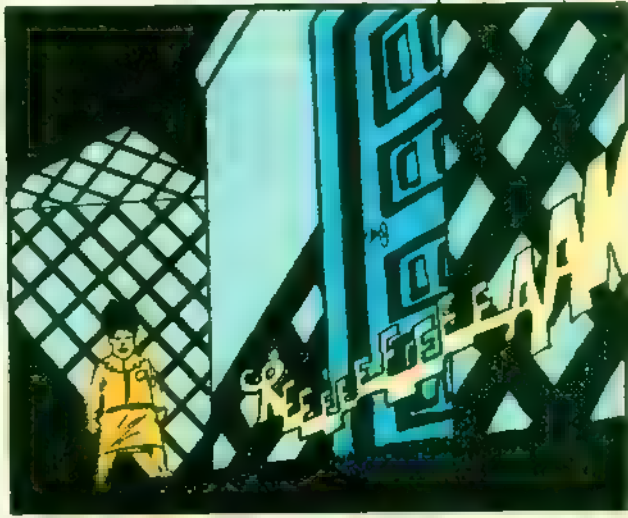
IT'S NO USE--
SOME EVIL SPIRITS
HAVE POSSESSED
THESE TWINS... BUT
WHO COULD IT
BE?



VERY GOOD! I'M STELLA
PECKSHAW AND THIS IS MY
SISTER DELIA. WE ARE THE
NEW ZOMBIE QUEENS OF
NEW ORLEANS.











DEADMAN!
WHERE ARE
YOU?



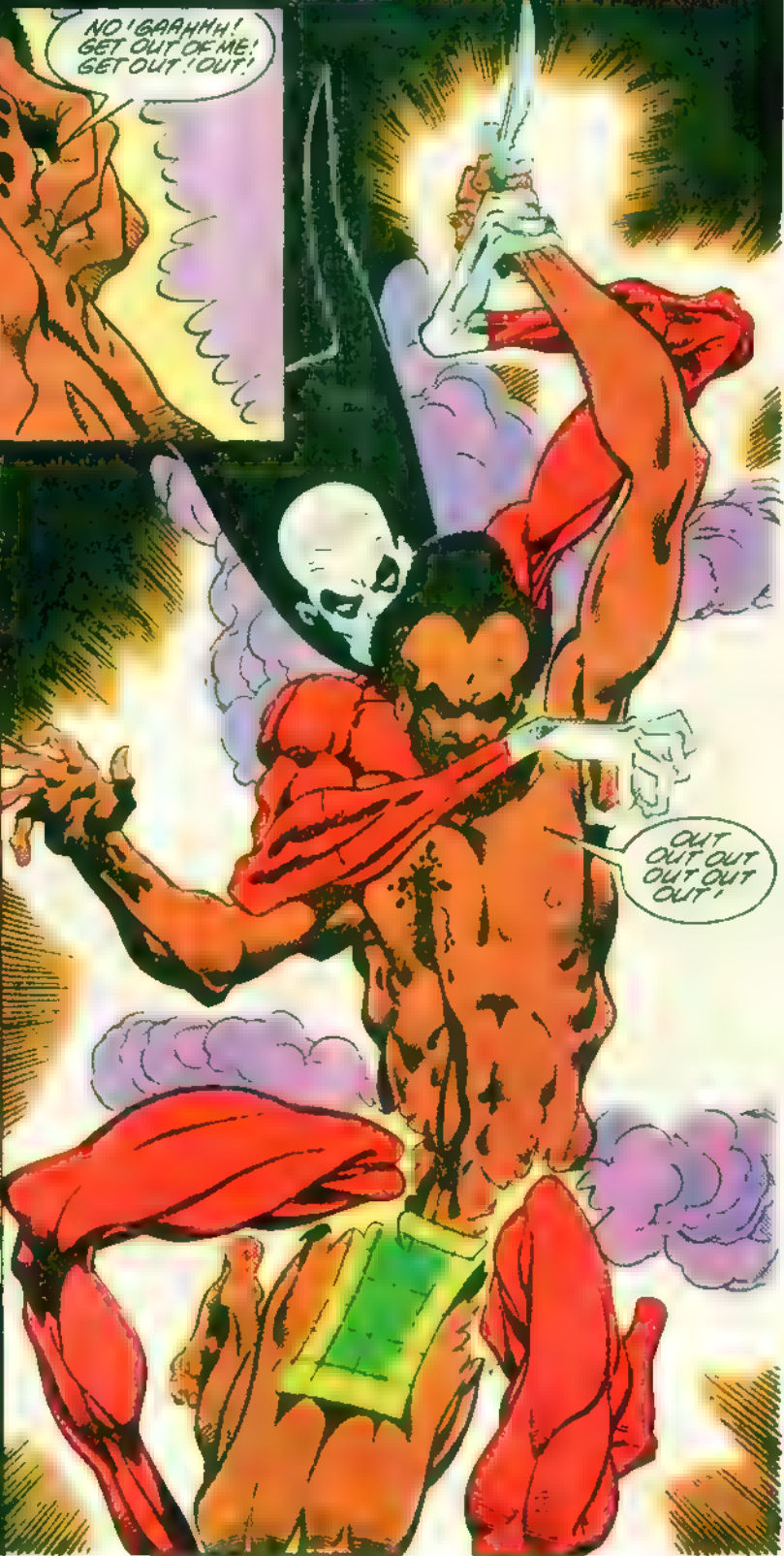
NO! GAAHH!
GET OUT OF ME!
GET OUT! OUT!



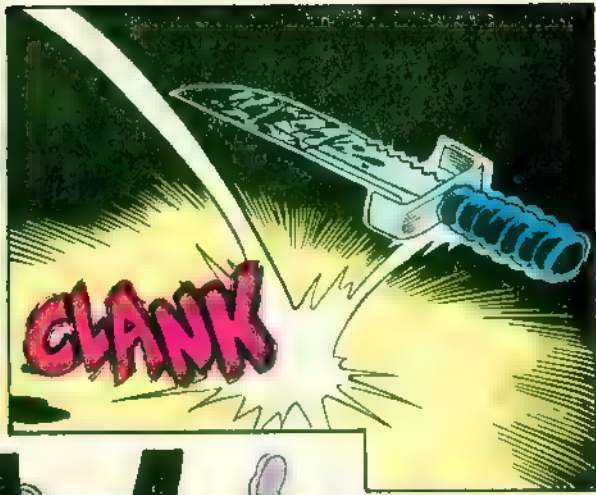
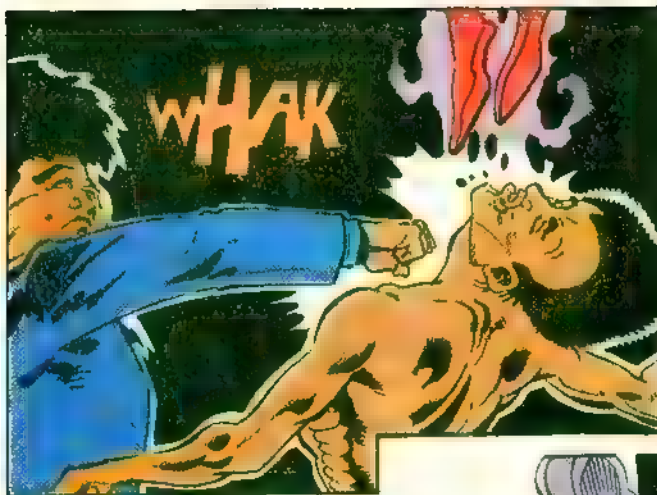
I'LL MAKE
YOU GET
OUT!



CHOCK



OUT
OUT OUT
OUT OUT
OUT!

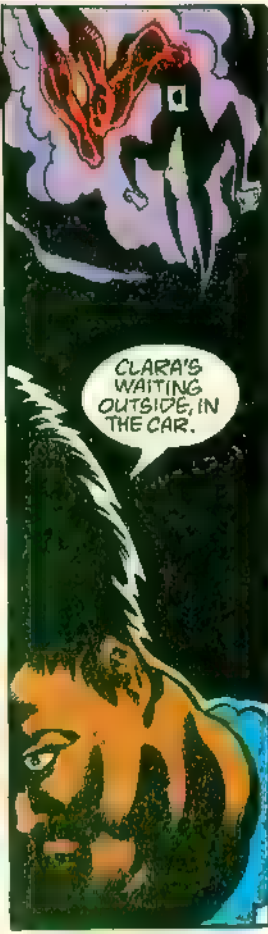


DEADMAN,
ARE YOU
HERE? WHAT
HAPPENED?

I'M HERE,
MADAME. BUT I
DON'T KNOW HOW
I'M GOING TO
EXPLAIN ALL THIS...



I'LL
BE RIGHT
BACK.



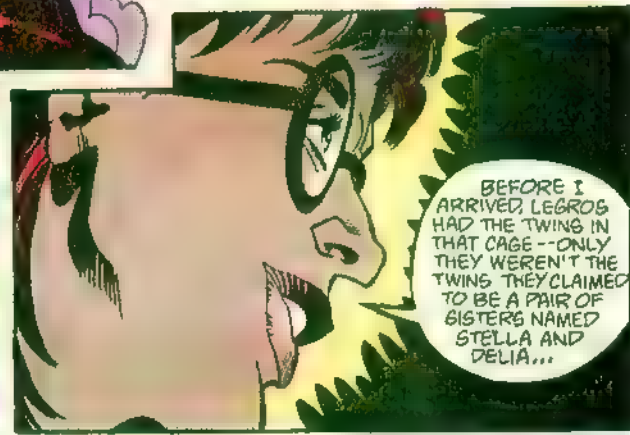
CLARA'S
WAITING
OUTSIDE, IN
THE CAR.



MOMENTS
LATER.

I HOPE WE
DON'T GIVE CLARA
A PSYCHOSIS.

CLARA'S
TOUGH. THAT'S
WHY I HIRED
HER. WELL
HONEYCHILD, I
DO WISH YOU'D
COMMENCE.



BEFORE I
ARRIVED, LEGROS
HAD THE TWIN IN
THAT CAGE--ONLY
THEY WEREN'T THE
TWIN THEY CLAIMED
TO BE A PAIR OF
SISTERS NAMED
STELLA AND
DELIA...

THEN THEY ZAPPED ME. NEXT THING I KNOW, I'M FIGHTING TO GET OUT OF LEGROS AND THE ZOMBIES ARE ALL GONE.

YOU KNOW THIS DELIA AND STELLA?

I SURE DO...

THEY WERE YOUNG GIRLS, BUT TROUBLE ENOUGH, LIVING OUT THERE IN THE SWAMP WITH THEIR CRAZY FAMILY... MY MOTHER CLEANED HOUSE FOR THEM. THOSE TWO LITTLE GIRLS BECAME THE VODOO QUEENS OF NEW ORLEANS AND IN 1871, THEY NEARLY TOOK OVER THE CITY

WHAT HAPPENED?

THEY'RE BURIED IN ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CEMETERY--OR THEY WERE...

ARISE, OUR ARMY OF THE NIGHT!

WE'RE BACK, JUST AS WE PROMISED! THE POWER IS OURS-- ALL OUR ENEMIES HAVE BEEN DEFEATED!

IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR US TO TAKE THE CITY BACK FROM THE LIVING! LISTEN NOW TO YOUR MARCHING ORDERS...

TO BE CONTINUED...



DC COMICS INC.

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L-3383

To Sharon Wright and Mike Gold

Re: Black Canary
WHOOAH!! Wait a minute! In ACW #609 Black Canary is burning her costume. What's wrong is that in DETECTIVE COMICS #564, in the Green Arrow Black Canary story (page 5 panel 1), Dinah thinks to herself that "The new duds are fireproof."
So how can a fireproof costume burn in a fireplace??!!

Baffled,
Stephanie Chan
7755 82 Ave
Edmonton, Alberta
T6C 0X8
Canada

Actually, Steph, the burning of the costume was more symbolic than anything else. Dinah could have flipped it into the dumpster, but that wouldn't have been nearly as dramatic.

Hey guys

Black Canary looks like she's going disco dancing

R. Allen Oswald
837 Geneva Avenue
San Francisco CA 94112

Maybe she is, wiseguy. It's not all flower shop and fighting crime for our Ms. Lance, you know.

Dear ACW

I must take this moment to congratulate you people on making it to issue #610 without falling behind schedule. Every issue has been on time.

Now the review

Green Lantern: Good story (hope you aren't planning to kill Arisia; she's too good a character. I mean, if you killed her, I'd have to waste you guys. We wouldn't want that, would we?)

The Phantom Stranger: Excellent! I saw those drawings and said, "Now! It couldn't be this! It's Kyle Baker!" That right there, made this my favorite feature. The story wasn't half bad either.

Deadman: So many twists and turns. It makes me dizzy just thinking about this series. I suspected from the start that that wasn't Satan--he seemed to have too little power.

The Secret Six: Good story, but I found it a little slow moving. How are these guys, who are holding Rafael hostage, connected to the Mucknighd? Interesting.

DC Focus: More Kyle Baker! Awright! By the way, HAYWIRE looks like it might be a pretty good book.

Black Canary: I was looking forward to these stories, but they read saprophy to me greatly. The story isn't that good so far, and the art is getting on my nerves. Look at the conversation scene on the couch. Randy tried to make it as interesting as possible and overdid it. Almost every known angle and trick was used in the space of two pages! You've got the bird's-eye view, the worm's-eye view, the outside-the-building view, the face-in-the-shadows view and the worst of all, the reflection in the table view. They weren't doing anything, so the reflections weren't doing anything. What was the point of that? The page where they first sat on the couch was much more interesting than the following pages.

Nick Dutton
4040 Grislam Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90805

Give Randy credit for trying to break what is often a fairly dry type of sequence, the conversation, into interesting panels. If, in the process, he overreached, that's better than not reaching at all.

Dear Everybody

Once again, Deadman was my favorite. I'm really intrigued by his story. The art was fantastic and the script is very well written. It's all just perfect whatever secrets you're using, use them more often.

In the Phantom Stranger feature, Kyle Baker's art really complemented this mysterious guy, but the story was too rushed. This is one possible problem with ACW: you could get to the point where you're giving us one shot eight-page stories with no real depth or detail. Once in a while a little break from the regular routine is nice, but not too often.

Everything else was great. I really look forward to ACW every week. I think it's worth the wait.

Jay Roe
1340 Third Street
Brookings, SD 57006

Dear ACW

After reading the Phantom Stranger one shot in ACW #610, I felt compelled to write in. No other DC character has

been mishandled quite so often as the Stranger.

I liked him way back when, the Phantom Stranger was one of my favorite characters during the early issues of his own magazine. He was a narrator with cosmic insight, a bystander with the knack for being in the right place at the right time. Now he is being ruined.

Too much of his background is being revealed. Too much is being made clear. His powers are being revealed. In the old days, we were never sure if he even had powers! The old Stranger would never be sucked into a phone, Bruce Gordon would simply have turned his back for an instant, then turned to find himself alone.

Don't get me wrong. I still like the character (he's among my top three), and I still like the idea of having one shot stories in this magazine. I just think both could be used better.

John Q. Gerdes Esq.
P.O. Box 343
Coburnville, IL 62234

We'll certainly take your comments under advisement, J.Q., though you might want to keep in mind that the Stranger has decided to live among man in order to better understand us. In the process, we hope, like you, that he doesn't lose his mysterious edge. If you see him with a Walkman, though, worry.

Dear Mike and Brian

Tenth issue, tenth week, tenth batch!

1. Deadman: While it wasn't "Girl Fight Tonight!" between Nancy and Kaisa, it was still fantastic, from the cool as a cucumber TV producer who said "I've been shot" to the return of Major Kasaba (I see an ally forming here, who says only circus folks and Darknight Detectives can work with Deadman?) and the entrance of the Big Boss in the form of D.B. Cooper. The Deadman in ACTION COMICS WEEKLY is very different from the one who used to haunt STRANGE ADVENTURES, but he's just as good.

2. Phantom Stranger: At last! An eight-pager that was just an eight-pager and not a chapter of a longer story! Paul Kupperberg continued the good work with the Stranger that he started in his 1987 Limited Series and he even threw in Bruce Gordon and an indication of what PS did between defending Order

If I bet his translations are definitive for good measure. But Kyle Baker was disappointed after Mike Mignola and P. Craig Russell, and I'd prefer to see an artist whose sense of the mundane doesn't take a back seat to his sense of the mysterious draw the adventures. Can you get Jim Aparo to draw PS once in a while?

3) Green Lantern—GL didn't find what he was looking for in his fight with the sword-welder—i.e., the nature of his fearlessness—but with the dieting Jumbo, the gorgeous Arisia and the overworked police lieutenant, there was plenty to enjoy in "Risky Business" any way. But what about John Stewart? The insect-being who took Star Sapphire off Earth? And that heroic poozer, Kilowog?

4) Superman—Bob Gall's power took me by surprise and my sympathies are squarely with Perry White (nice job Roger, but watch the anachronisms would Perry really go to the fights in 1988? Were you thinking of wrestling matches?)

5) The Secret Six—The trouble with this installment is that the professionalism was overriding just about everything else. For sheer passion, we had to leave the new Six behind and turn to Rafael di Rienzi in his gilded prison. Mockingbird's scope shouldn't be limited to corporate heads. I'd like to see an assignment with a more international scope soon.

6) Black Canary—I know that Randy drew the Bonus Book in DP #9, but that's no reason for Dinah's resemblance to Celsius as she spoke to Rita. The separate elements of the plot are more confusing than enthralling and hey, like Oliver, I like fishnets and I like Dinah in them. The picture on page 7 (panel 1) was striking, but it doesn't say "Black Canary" to me. Her boyfriend is Green Arrow, remember not The Question.

Showcase within ACTION sounds good to me!

Charles J. Sperling
37-15 Parsons Blvd
Flushing, NY 11354

Black Canary and her fishnets are back together, though she may sport the occasional intermediate costume as well—it'd be a little tough to do under cover work with everyone looking at her legs, you have to admit.

I think I can say without too much argument, that Kyle Baker has more than his share of the sense of the mundane and a finely honed sense of the mysterious. Don't take my word for it, though—read the SHADOW, or Kyle's hilarious book, The Cowboy Wally Show.

And is it really that anachronistic to want to go to "the fights"? I feel reasonably certain that if one were a fan of the sport of boxing, one could find matches to attend. Or should Perry have expressed a desire to attend the "pugilist emporium"?

Step lively, everyone, here comes the moment we've been anxiously awaiting! The one and only

THE GREAT ACTION WEEKLY POLL

Here are the rankings of the features in ACW #610, based on your votes. The previous week's standings are shown in parenthesis.

- 1) Deadman (1)
- 2) Green Lantern (2)
- 3) Phantom Stranger
- 4) Superman (6)
- 5) Black Canary (5)
- 6) Secret Six (4)

As always, thanks for your participation—keep reading, keep voting, but don't forget to send along your comments about what we did right and what we did wrong.

People

So far, none of the letters in ACTION have reflected my own reaction to the anthology format—I feel ripped off by it.

Some of the series are ones I'm interested in, like Green Lantern and Superman. But in order to get those series, I also have to buy series that I wouldn't have bought at all, or would have stopped buying after one issue—series like Blackhawk, Wild Dog, and Black Canary.

Basically, I either have to give up series I want to read, or pay \$6.00 a month for the three dollars of material I want. I'm buying ACW for now, but any week it may go the way of Marvel's anthology, which I stopped buying.

because I didn't think it was worth the total cost, despite containing one series I liked.

I'd prefer to see the series from ACW put into separate monthly titles, so I can choose the one I want to buy. If you can't do that, how about having a bi-weekly ACTION anthology with the more superheroish series I like, and another title for the gritty, realistic series I don't.

Theodore Miller
158-15 79th St

Howard Beach, NY 11414

We'd love to follow your wish list to the letter, Ted, but the fact is we publish ACW for a slightly larger audience than just you. Obviously, we like the anthology format, in part because of its time-proven ability to please a wide range of tastes with a diverse, well-balanced line-up. The best thing about this specific anthology is the rotating format. If you don't like some series or another, stick around, there's new material on the horizon. Not to mention that you can vote to specifically shape the future of ACW.

Sorry you feel as negatively as you do, Ted, but I hope you stick it out and enjoy some of the great new stuff coming up.

Gotta go. Join us in one week for more of all our heroes and a nifty (nifty?) cover featuring Green Lantern from the art team of Ron Frenz and Larry Mahlstedt. See ya' then.

—Brian Augustyn



***** VOTE! *****

Just as soon as you've finished this issue of ACTION COMICS WEEKLY—write us a letter or a postcard and rank this issue's stories in order of preference: the one you like the most first, the one you liked second, and so on.

Each week, we tally the vote and print the results right here in our letter column. Your opinion counts, so VOTE!

Send your ballots to:
Action Comics Weekly
Department 621
DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

BLACKHAWK



SUMATRA-- JUNE, 1947.
THE PEPPER PLANTATION OF
JOHANNES VAN DER HOUTEN

HERE WE BOIL
THE
PEPPERCORNS

ONLY FOR 15
MINUTES AT A TIME--
FORTUNATELY FOR MY
WORKERS MOST
UNCOMFORTABLE,
THE STEAM IN
HERE.

SO WE HAVE
NOTICED.

THE
BURNERS WE
NEVER TURN OFF--
TOO LONG IT TAKES
TO REHEAT THE
VATS

LOCKED IN
HERE OVERNIGHT,
ACCIDENTALLY, ONE
OF MY MEN WAS. ON
THE GROUNDS, HE IS
BURIED.

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO DRAW
US A PICTURE,
FAT BOY.

THEN YOU
KNOW THAT THIS
TORMENT YOU CAN
END, JA?

IT'S NOT THE HEAT. IT'S THE FUTILITY

MARTIN PASKO

WRITER

RICK BURCHETT

ARTIST

STEVE HAYNIE
LETTERER

TOM ZIUKO
COLORIST

MIKE GOLD
EDITOR

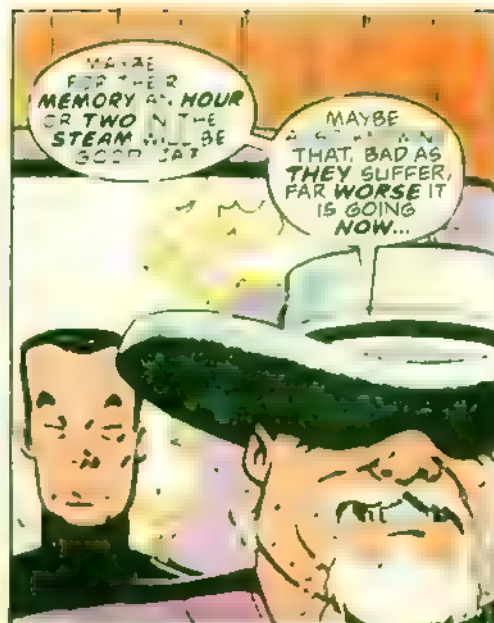


FOR THE LAST
TIME WE CAN'T
TELL YOU A
THING! THE
RICHARDSON
GUY JUST
HIRED US--



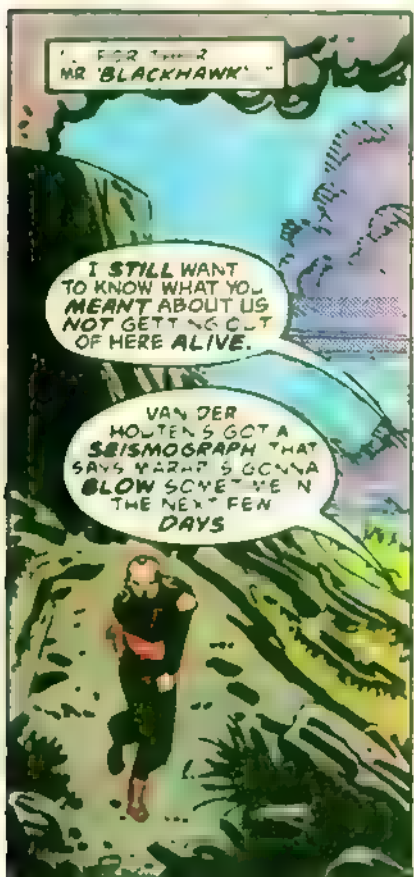
IT'S A FAMILIAR
SONG I HEAR
NEARLY EVERY
ON THE HIT
PARADE.

COME,
KURT
OUR TIME
WASTE
HERE



WE'VE
FOR THE
MEMORY AN HOUR
OR TWO IN THE
STEAM WILL BE
GOOD DAY

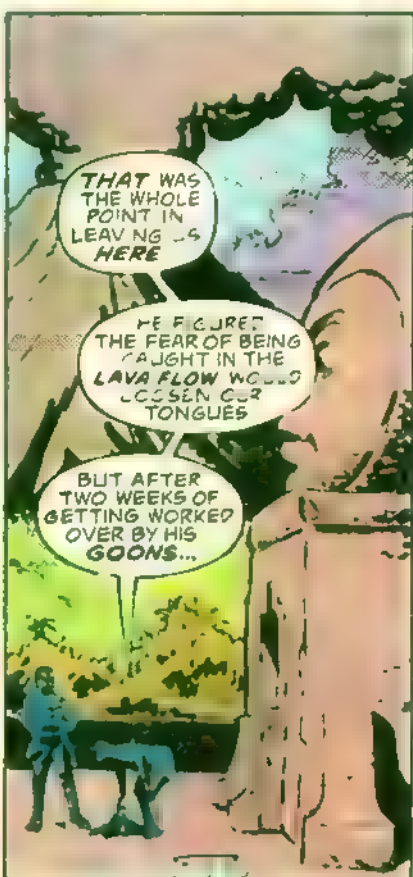
MAYBE
THAT, BAD AS
THEY SUFFER,
FAR WORSE IT
IS GOING
NOW...



FOR THE 2
MR 'BLACKHAWK'

I STILL WANT
TO KNOW WHAT YOU
MEANT ABOUT US
NOT GETTING OUT
OF HERE ALIVE.

VAN DER
HOUTEN'S GOT A
SEISMOGRAPH THAT
SAYS THERE'S GONNA
BLOW SOME TIME IN
THE NEXT FEW
DAYS



THAT WAS
THE WHOLE
POINT IN
LEAVING US
HERE

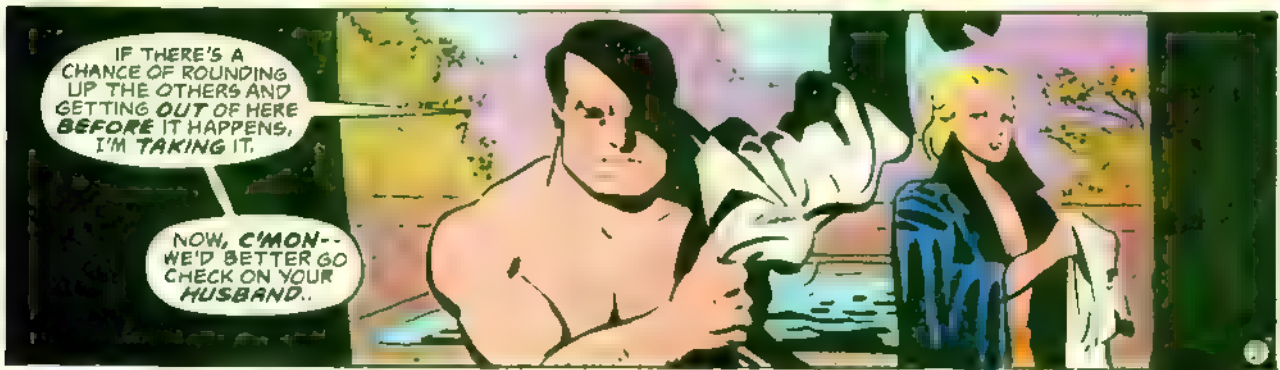
HE FIGURED
THE FEAR OF BEING
CAUGHT IN THE
LAVA FLOW WOULD
LOOSEN OUR
TONGUES

BUT AFTER
TWO WEEKS OF
GETTING WORKED
OVER BY HIS
GOONS...



I JUST SAID, "SCREW IT--
IT HAPPENS. IT HAPPENS
ANYWAY. A LITTLE
BETTER THAN THAT

IF YOU DON'T
WANT I'M GOING
FATALISTIC.



IF THERE'S A
CHANCE OF ROUNDING
UP THE OTHERS AND
GETTING OUT OF HERE
BEFORE IT HAPPENS,
I'M TAKING IT.

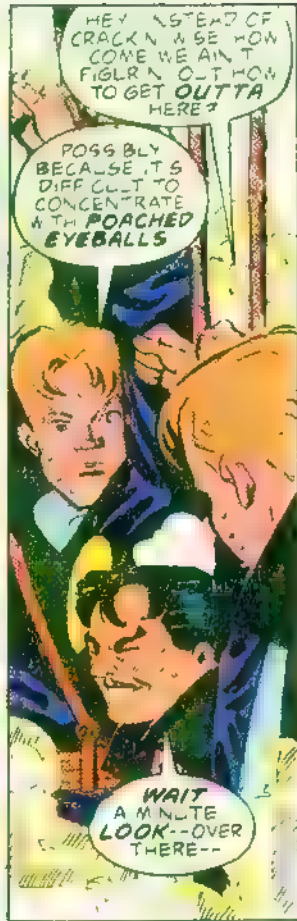
NOW, C'MON--
WE'D BETTER GO
CHECK ON YOUR
HUSBAND.



MEANWHILE

IS IT MY
MAGINATION
OR AM I
TURNING
RED?

DON'T
WORRY--IF I
SEE ANYBODY
SNEAKING UP ON
YOU WITH SOME
MELTED BUTTER,
I'LL LET YOU
KNOW



HEY, INSTEAD OF
CRACKIN' WEE-HOW
COME WE AIN'T
FIGURIN' OUT HOW
TO GET OUTTA
HERE?

POSSIBLY
BECAUSE IT'S
DIFFICULT TO
CONCENTRATE
WITH POACHED
EYEBALLS

WAIT
A MINUTE
LOOK--OVER
THERE--



--THAT
SHELVING LOOKS
LIKE IT'S WITHIN
"KICKING RANGE"
AND THERE'S A
SKYLIGHT UP
ABOVE US



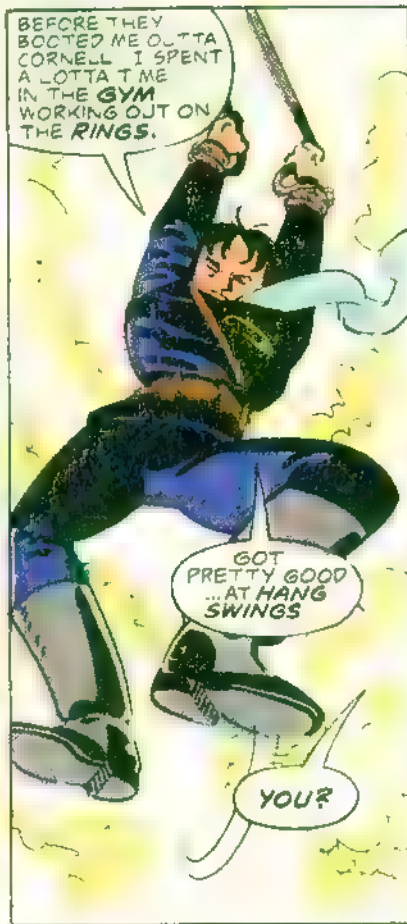
YEAH, AND
THE KNEEBONES
CONNECTED TO THE
THIGH BONE I THINK
THE STEAMS GO ON
STRAIGHT TO YOUR
BRAIN CHAN



YOU'LL SEE WHAT
I'M THINKING IN A
MINUTE, CHUCK 'COUSE
I MIGHT KILL MYSELF
TRYING TO PULL THIS
OFF.

AT THIS POINT,
MY FRIEND, THAT
MIGHT BE AN
IMPROVEMENT

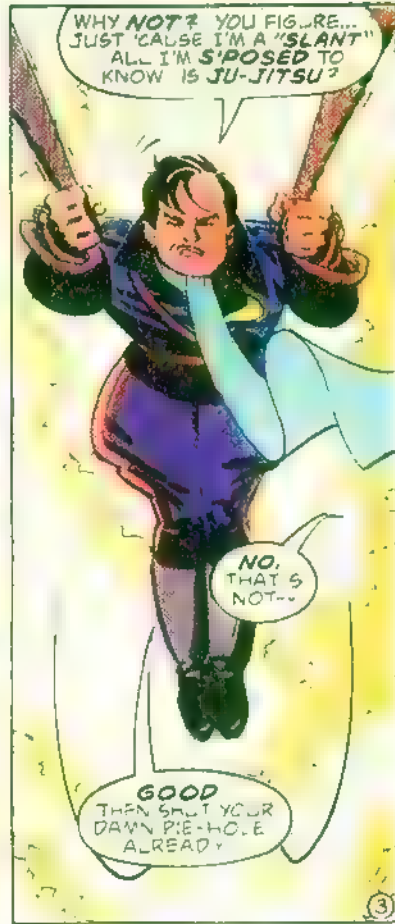
BUT WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?



BEFORE THEY
BOOED ME OUTTA
CORNELL I SPENT
A LOTTA TIME
IN THE GYM
WORKING OUT ON
THE RINGS.

GOT
PRETTY GOOD
...AT HANG
SWINGS

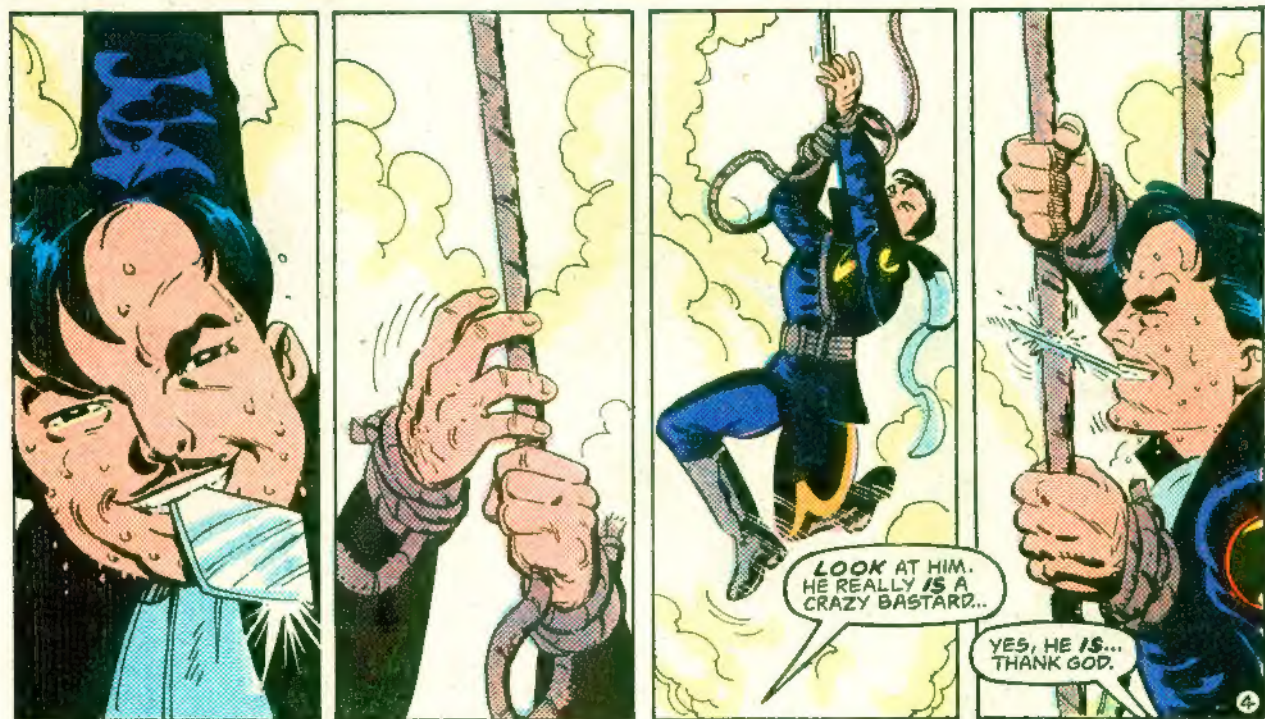
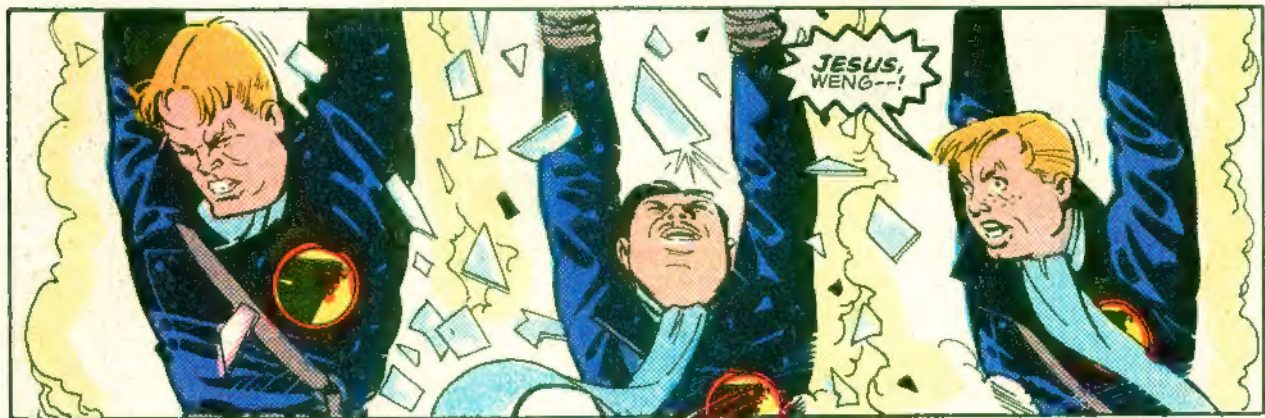
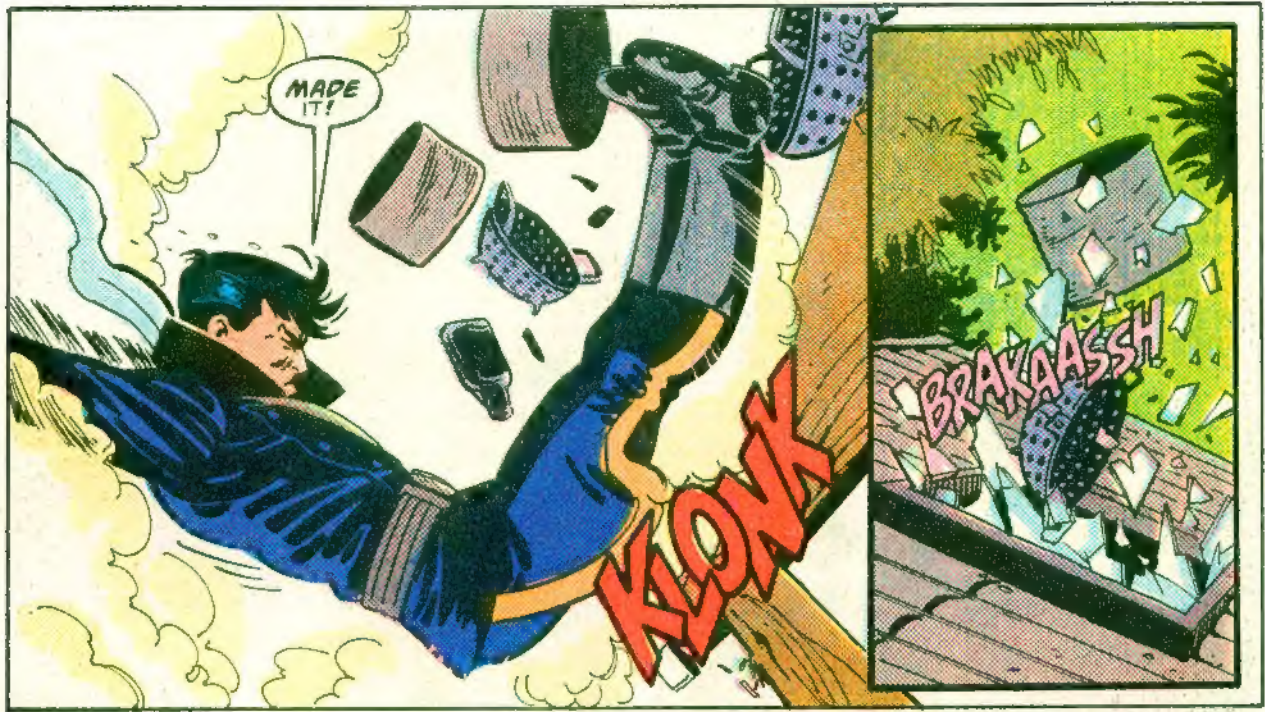
YOUR?



WHY NOT? YOU FIGURE...
JUST 'CAUSE I'M A "SLANT"
ALL I'M SUPPOSED TO
KNOW IS JU-JITSU?

NO,
THAT'S
NOT--

GOOD
THEN SHUT YOUR
DAVN PIE-HOLE
ALREADY



MEANWHILE:

HE'S
COMING
AROUND...

MARCIA...?
YOU'RE
ALIVE?!

"MARCIA?"

OBVIOUSLY,
BUT WHAT
ABOUT YOU?

I'VE HAD
WORSE
HANGOVERS.

JESUS, MARCIA,
WHERE ARE YOUR
CLOTHES? WHAT THE
HELL'S BEEN GOING
ON HERE?!

C'MON, STEVE,
TAKE IT EASY--
I'M A BIG GIRL NOW.
AND YOU'VE GOT
NOTHING TO SAY
ABOUT WHAT I DO--

FOR CHRISSAKE,
SOMEBODY BETTER
TELL ME WHO THE
HELL YOU PEOPLE
ARE-- NOW--OR
SO HELP ME--

HIS REAL NAME'S
STEVE CLAIBORNE.
I'M MARCIA ROSSITER.
WE'RE WITH A CIG
SPECIAL OPERATIONS
UNIT--

A
WHAT?

CENTRAL
INTELLIGENCE
GROUP.

OUR CHIEF
REPORTS DIRECTLY
TO THE DDCI,
GENERAL
WRIGHT--

WHO?

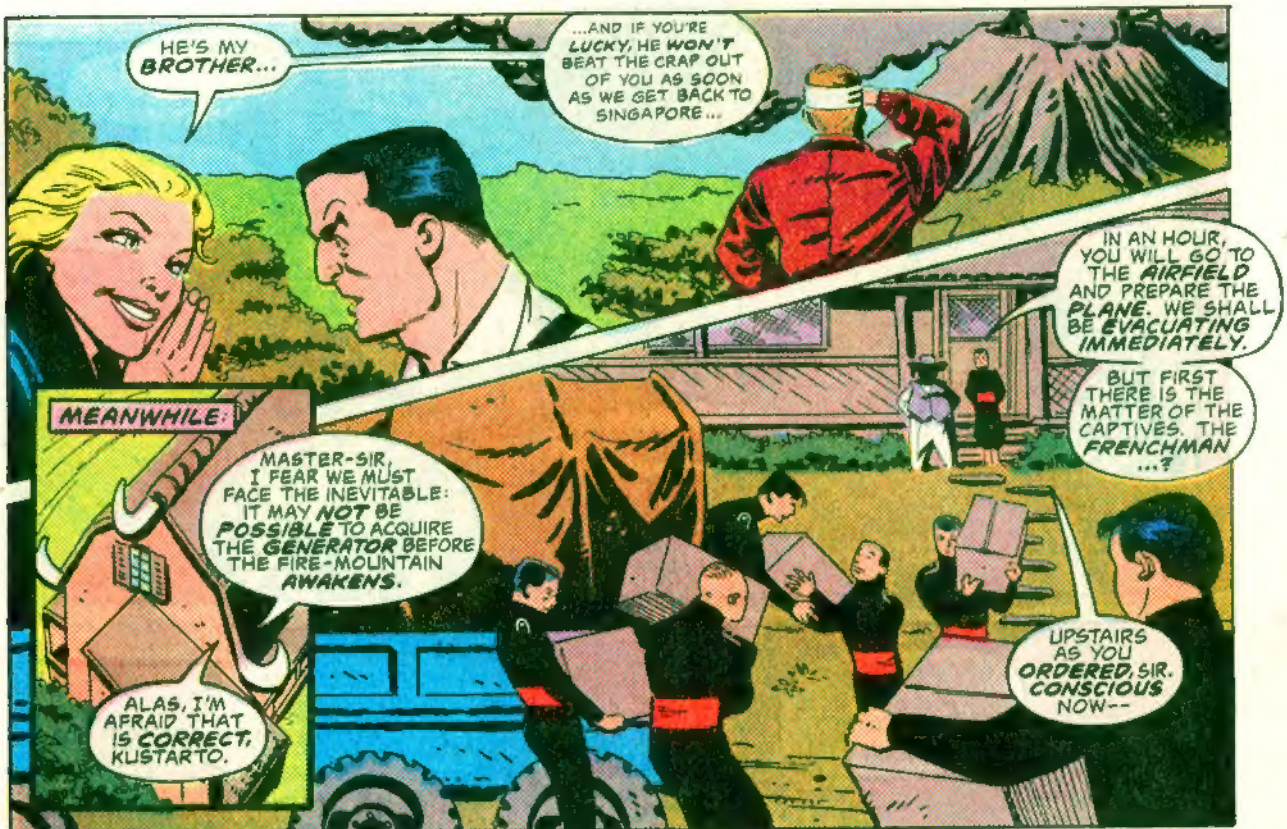
DEPUTY
DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL
INTELLIGENCE.

FOR A
MILITARY MAN,
YOU SURE HAVEN'T
KEPT UP ON WHAT'S
GOING ON BACK
HOME, HAVE YOU,
PROHASKA?

THEN HE'S
NOT YOUR
HUSBAND?

HELL, NO! I THOUGHT
I SAID THAT.

IF HE WERE MY
HUSBAND, HE'D BE
GRATEFUL TO YOU.
MY HUSBAND'S 66
AND BEEN CONFINED
TO A WHEELCHAIR
SINCE 1939.



HE'S MY BROTHER...

...AND IF YOU'RE LUCKY, HE WON'T BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF YOU AS SOON AS WE GET BACK TO SINGAPORE...

IN AN HOUR, YOU WILL GO TO THE AIRFIELD AND PREPARE THE PLANE. WE SHALL BE EVACUATING IMMEDIATELY.

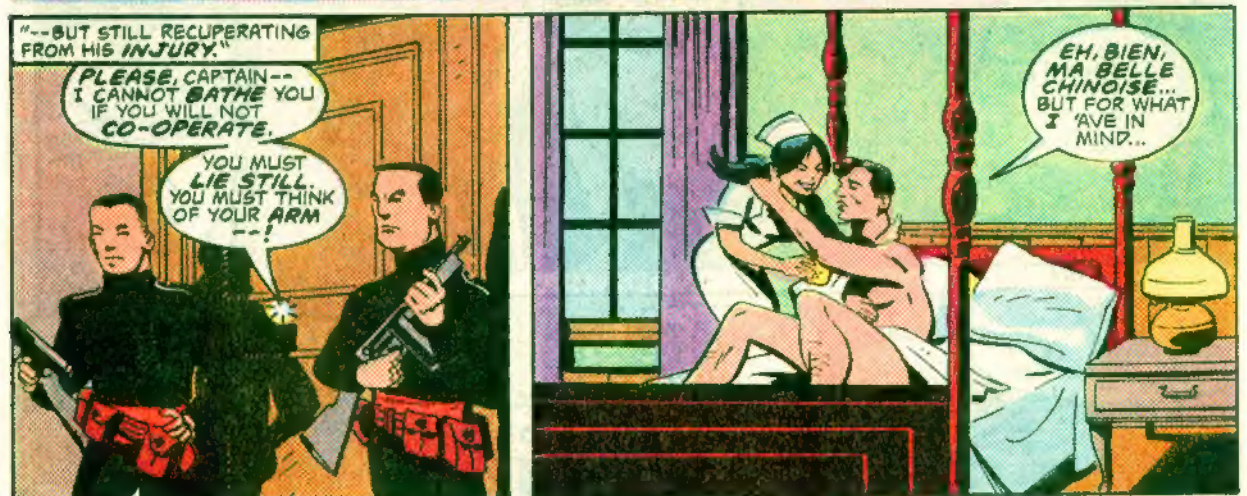
BUT FIRST THERE IS THE MATTER OF THE CAPTIVES. THE FRENCHMAN ...?

MEANWHILE:

MASTER-SIR, I FEAR WE MUST FACE THE INEVITABLE: IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ACQUIRE THE GENERATOR BEFORE THE FIRE-MOUNTAIN AWAKENS.

ALAS, I'M AFRAID THAT IS CORRECT, KUSTARTO.

UPSTAIRS AS YOU ORDERED, SIR. CONSCIOUS NOW--

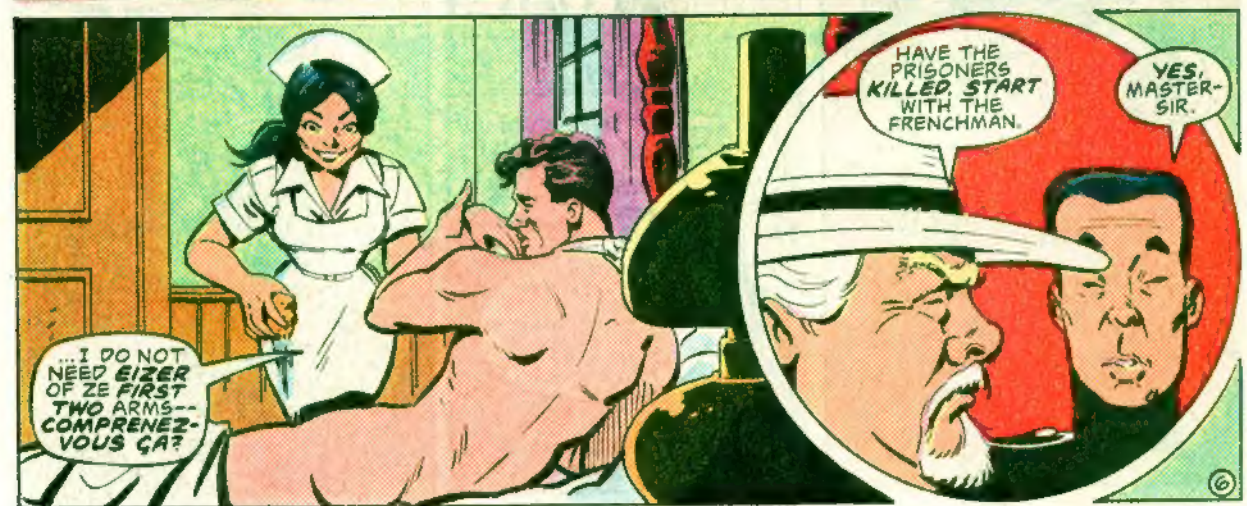


"--BUT STILL RECUPERATING FROM HIS INJURY."

PLEASE, CAPTAIN-- I CANNOT BATHE YOU IF YOU WILL NOT CO-OPERATE.

YOU MUST LIE STILL. YOU MUST THINK OF YOUR ARM --!

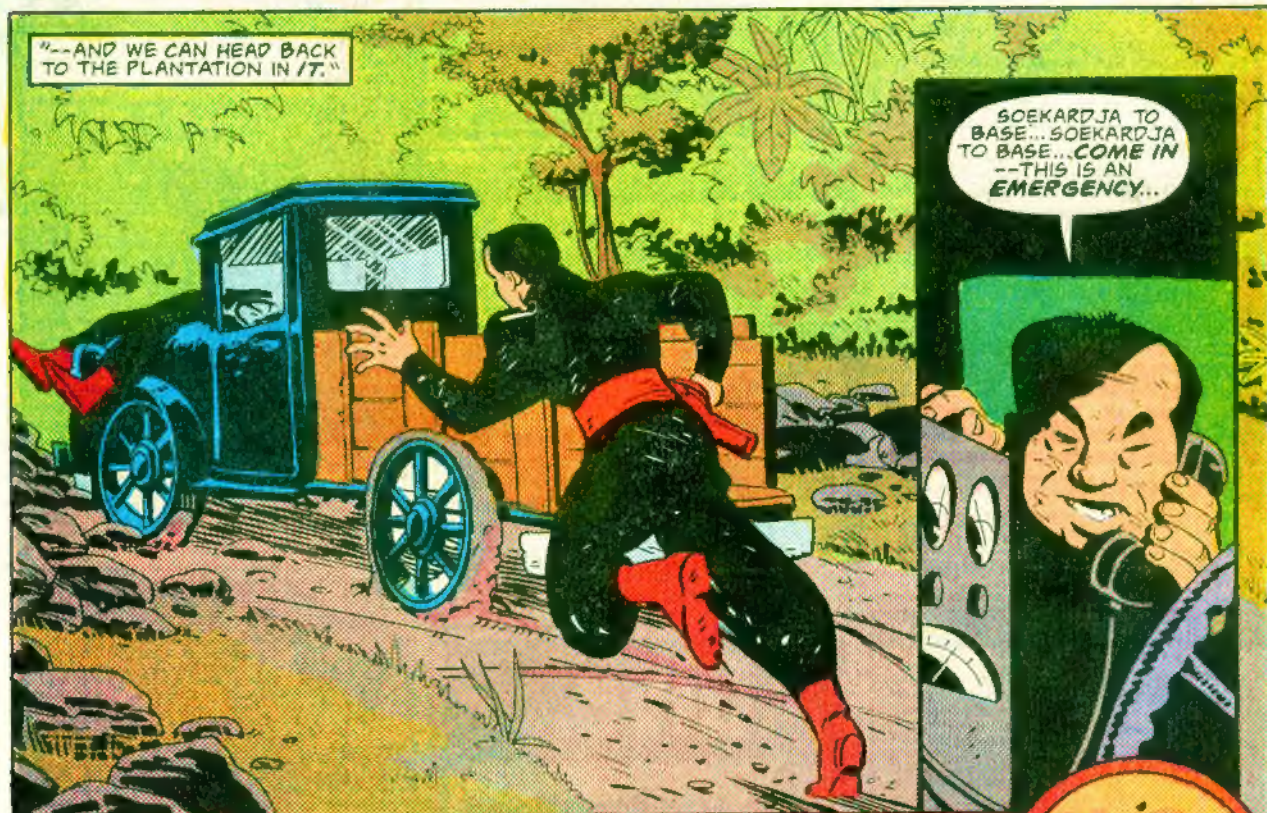
EH, BIEN, MABELLE CHINOISE... BUT FOR WHAT I'VE IN MIND...



...I DO NOT NEED EIZER OF ZE FIRST TWO ARMS-- COMPRENEZ-VOUS GA?

HAVE THE PRISONERS KILLED START WITH THE FRENCHMAN.

YES, MASTER-SIR.



NEXT WEEK
THE BIG BLOWOFF

